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THE
QUEEN'S WAKE:

A
Legendary Poem,

BY
JAMES HOGG.

*Be mine to read the visions old,
Which thy awakening Bards have told ;
And whilst they meet thy tranced view,
Hold each strange tale devoutly true.*

COLLINS.

EDINBURGH:

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1813.

LOAN STACK

QUEEN'S WAKE:

WEDNESDAY

JAMES HOGG

THE QUEEN'S WAKE
A NOVEL IN THREE VOLUMES
BY JAMES HOGG
ESQ. OF ABERDEEN

EDINBURGH

PRINTED BY JAMES WILKIE, STATIONER AND PRINTER, 10, N. BRIDGE STREET.

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MAIN

TO

HER ROYAL HIGHNESS

PRINCESS CHARLOTTE OF WALES,

A SHEPHERD

AMONG

THE MOUNTAINS OF SCOTLAND,

DEDICATES

THIS POEM.

1870

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INTRODUCTION.

INTRODUCTION.

Now burst, ye Winter clouds that lower,
Fling from your folds the piercing shower ;
Sing to the tower and leafless tree,
Ye cold winds of adversity ;
Your blights, your chilling influence shed,
On wareless heart, and houseless head ;
Your ruth or fury I disdain,
I've found my Mountain Lyre again.

Come to my heart, my only stay !
Companion of a happier day !
Thou gift of heaven ! thou pledge of good !
Harp of the mountain and the wood !

I little thought, when first I tried
Thy notes by lone Saint Mary's side ;
When in a deep untrodden den,
I found thee in the braken glen,
I little thought that idle toy
Should e'er become my only joy !

A maiden's youthful smiles had wove
Around my heart the toils of love,
When first thy magic wires I rung,
And on the breeze thy numbers flung.
The fervid tear played in mine eye ;
I trembled, wept, and wondered why.
Sweet was the thrilling ecstasy :
I know not if 'twas love or thee.

Weened not my heart, when youth had flown,
Friendship would fade, or fortune frown ;
When pleasure, love, and mirth were past,
That thou should'st prove my all at last !

Jeered by conceit and lordly pride,
 I flung my soothing harp aside;
 With wayward fortune strove a while;
 Wrecked in a world of self and guile.
 Again I sought the braken hill;
 Again sat musing by the rill;
 My wild sensations all were gone,
 And only thou wert left alone.
 Long hast thou in the moorland lain,
 Now welcome to my heart again.

The russet weed of mountain gray
 No more shall round thy border play;
 No more the brake-flowers, o'er thee piled,
 Shall mar thy tones and measures wild.
 Harp of the Forest, thou shalt be
 Fair as the bud on forest tree!
 Sweet be thy strains, as those that swell
 In Ettrick's green and fairy dell;
 Soft as the breeze of falling even,
 And purer than the dews of heaven.

Of minstrel honours, now no more ;
Of bards, who sung in days of yore ;
Of gallant chiefs, in courtly guise ;
Of ladies' smiles ; of ladies' eyes ;
Of royal feasts and obsequies ;
When Caledon, with look severe,
Saw Beauty's hand her sceptre bear,—
By cliff and haunted wild I'll sing,
Responsive to thy dulcet string.

When wanes the circling year away,
When scarcely smiles the doubtful day,
Fair daughter of Dunedin, say,
Hast thou not heard, at midnight deep,
Soft music on thy slumbers creep ?
At such a time, if careless thrown
Thy slender form on couch of down,
Hast thou not felt, to nature true,
The tear steal from thine eye so blue ?
If then thy guiltless bosom strove
In blissful dreams of conscious love,

And even shrunk from proffer bland
Of lover's visionary hand,
On such ecstatic dream when brake
The music of the midnight wake,
Hast thou not weened thyself on high,
List'ning to angels' melody,
'Scaped from a world of cares away,
To dream of love and bliss for ay?

The dream dispelled, the music gone,
Hast thou not, sighing, all alone,
Proffered thy vows to heaven, and then
Blest the sweet wake, and slept again?

Then list, ye maidens, to my lay,
Though old the tale, and past the day;
Those wakes, now played by minstrels poor,
At midnight's darkest, chillest hour,
Those humble wakes, now scorned by all,
Were first begun in courtly hall,

When royal MARY, blithe of mood,
Kept holiday at Holyrood.

Scotland, involved in factious broils,
Groaned deep beneath her woes and toils,
And looked o'er meadow, dale, and lea,
For many a day her Queen to see;
Hoping that then her woes would cease,
And all her vallies smile in peace.

The Spring was past, the Summer gone;
Still vacant stood the Scottish throne:
But scarce had Autumn's mellow hand
Waved her rich banner o'er the land,
When rang the shouts, from tower and tree,
That Scotland's Queen was on the sea.
Swift spread the news o'er down and dale,
Swift as the lively Autumn gale;
Away, away, it echoed still,
O'er many a moor and Highland hill,
Till rang each glen and verdant plain,
From Cheviot to the northern main.

Each bard attuned the loyal lay,
And for Dunedin hied away ;
Each harp was strung in woodland bower,
In praise of beauty's bonniest flower.
The chiefs forsook their ladies fair ;
The priest his beads and books of prayer ;
The farmer left his harvest day ;
The shepherd all his flocks to stray ;
The forester forsook the wood,
And hasted on to Holyrood.

After a youth, by woes o'ercast,
After a thousand sorrows past,
The lovely Mary once again
Set foot upon her native plain ;
Kneeled on the pier with modest grace,
And turned to heaven her beauteous face.
'Twas then the caps in air were blended,
A thousand thousand shouts ascended ;
Shivered the breeze around the throng ;
Gray barrier cliffs the peals prolong ;

And every tongue gave thanks to heaven,
That Mary to their hopes was given.

Her comely form and graceful mien,
Bespoke the Lady and the Queen ;
The woes of one so fair and young,
Moved every heart and every tongue.
Driven from her home, a helpless child,
To brave the winds and billows wild ;
An exile bred in realms afar,
Amid commotions, broils, and war.
In one short year her hopes all crossed,—
A parent, husband, kingdom lost !
And all ere eighteen years had shed
Their honours o'er her royal head.
For such a Queen, the Stuarts' heir,
A Queen so courteous, young, and fair,
Who would not every foe defy !
Who would not stand ! who would not die !

Light on her airy steed she sprung,
Around with golden tassels hung,

No chieftain there rode half so free,
 Or half so light and gracefully.
 How sweet to see her ringlets pale
 Wide waving in the southland gale,
 Which through the broom-wood blossoms flew,
 To fan her cheeks of rosy hue !
 When'er it heaved her bosom's screen,
 What beauties in her form were seen !
 And when her courser's mane it swung,
 A thousand silver bells were rung.
 A sight so fair, on Scottish plain,
 A Scot shall never see again !

When Mary turned her wondering eyes
 On rocks that seemed to prop the skies ;
 On palace, park, and battled pile ;
 On lake, on river, sea, and isle ;
 O'er woods and meadows bathed in dew,
 To distant mountains wild and blue ;
 She thought the isle that gave her birth,
 The sweetest, wildest land on earth.

Slowly she ambled on her way
Amid her lords and ladies gay.
Priest, abbot, layman, all were there,
And Presbyter with look severe.
There rode the lords of France and Spain,
Of England, Flanders, and Lorraine,
While serried thousands round them stood,
From shore of Leith to Holyrood.

Though Mary's heart was light as air
To find a home so wild and fair;
To see a gathered nation by,
And rays of joy from every eye;
Though frequent shouts the welkin broke,
Though courtiers bowed and ladies spoke,
An absent look they oft could trace
Deep settled on her comely face.
Was it the thought, that all alone
She must support a rocking throne?
That Caledonia's rugged land
Might scorn a Lady's weak command,

And the Red Lion's haughty eye
Scowl at a maiden's feet to lie?

No ; 'twas the notes of Scottish song,
Soft pealing from the countless throng.
So mellowed came the distant swell,
That on her ravished ear it fell
Like dew of heaven, at evening close,
On forest flower or woodland rose.
For Mary's heart, to nature true,
The powers of song and music knew :
But all the choral measures bland,
Of anthems sung in southern land,
Appeared an useless pile of art,
Unfit to sway or melt the heart,
Compared with that which floated bye,—
Her simple native melody.

As she drew nigh the Abbey stile,
She halted, reined, and bent the while :

She heard the Caledonian lyre
Pour forth its notes of runic fire ;
But scarcely caught the ravished Queen
The minstrel's song that flowed between ;
Entranced upon the strain she hung,
'Twas thus the gray-haired minstrel sung.—

The Song.

“ O ! Lady dear, fair is thy noon,
But man is like the inconstant moon :
Last night she smiled o'er lawn and lea ;
That moon will change, and so will he.
“ Thy time, dear Lady, 's a passing shower ;
Thy beauty is but a fading flower :
Watch thy young bosom, and maiden eye,
For the shower must fall, and the flowret die.”—

What ails my Queen ? said good Argyle,
Why fades upon her cheek the smile ?

Say, rears your steed too fierce and high?
Or sits your golden seat awry?—

Ah! no, my Lord! this noble steed,
Of Rouen's calm and generous breed,
Has borne me over hill and plain,
Swift as the dun-deer of the Seine.
But such a wild and simple lay,
Poured from the harp of minstrel gray,
My every sense away it stole,
And swayed a while my raptured soul.
O! say, my Lord, (for you must know
What strains along your vallies flow,
And all the hoards of Highland lore,)
Was ever song so sweet before?—

Replied the Earl, as round he flung,—
Feeble the strain that minstrel sung!
My royal Dame, if once you heard
The Scottish lay from Highland bard,

Then might you say, in raptures meet,
No song was ever half so sweet !

It nerves the arm of warrior wight
To deeds of more than mortal might ;
'Twill make the maid, in all her charms,
Fall weeping in her lover's arms.
'Twill charm the mermaid from the deep ;
Make mountain oaks to bend and weep ;
Thrill every heart with horrors dire,
And shape the breeze to forms of fire.

When poured from greenwood-bower at even,
'Twill draw the spirits down from heaven ;
And all the fays that haunt the wood,
To dance around in frantic mood,
And tune their mimic harps so boon
Beneath the cliff and midnight moon.
Ah ! yes, my Queen ! if once you heard
The Scottish lay from Highland bard,

Then might you say in raptures meet,
No song was ever half so sweet.—

Queen Mary lighted in the court ;
Queen Mary joined the evening's sport ;
Yet though at table all were seen,
To wonder at her air and mien ;
Though courtiers fawned and ladies sung,
Still in her ear the accents rung,—
“ *Watch thy young bosom and maiden eye,*
“ *For the shower must fall and the flowret die.*”
And much she wished to prove ere long,
The wonderous powers of Scottish song.

When next to ride the Queen was bound,
To view the lands and city round,
On high amid the gathered crowd,
A herald thus proclaim'd aloud :—
“ Peace, peace to Scotland's wasted vales,
To her dark heaths and Highland dales ;

To her brave sons of warlike mood,
To all her daughters fair and good ;
Peace o'er her ruined vales shall pour,
Like beam of heaven behind the shower.
Let every harp and echo ring ;
Let maidens smile and poets sing ;
For love and peace entwined shall sleep,
Calm as the moon-beam on the deep ;
By waving wood and wandering rill,
On purple heath and Highland hill.

“ The soul of warrior stern to charm,
And bigotry and rage disarm,
Our Queen commands, that every bard
Due honours have, and high regard.
If, to his song of rolling fire,
He join the Caledonian lyre,
And skill in legendary lore,
Still higher shall his honours soar.
For all the arts beneath the heaven,
That man has found, or God has given,

None draws the soul so sweet away,
As music's melting mystic lay ;
Slight emblem of the bliss above,
It soothes the spirit all to love.

“ To cherish this attractive art,
To lull the passions, mend the heart,
And break the moping zealot's chains,
Hear what our lovely Queen ordains.

“ Each Caledonian bard must seek
Her courtly halls on Easter week,
That then the royal Wake may be
Cheered by their thrilling minstrelsy.
No ribaldry the Queen must hear,
No song unmeet for maiden's ear,
No jest, nor adulation bland,
But legends of our native land ;
And he whom most the Court regards,
High be his honours and rewards.

Let every Scottish bard give ear,
Let every Scottish bard appear ;
He then before the Court must stand,
In native garb, with harp in hand.
At home no minstrel dare to tarry :
High the behest.—God save Queen Mary !”

Little recked they, that countless throng,
Of music's power or minstrel's song ;
But crowding their young Queen around,
Whose stately courser pawed the ground,
Her beauty more their wonder swayed,
Than all the noisy herald said ;
Judging the proffer all in sport,
An idle whim of idle Court.
But many a bard preferred his prayer ;
For many a Scottish bard was there.
Quaked each fond heart with raptures strong,
Each thought upon his harp and song ;
And turning home without delay,
Coned his wild strain by mountain gray.

Each glen was sought for tales of old,
Of luckless love, of warrior bold,
Of ravished maid, or stolen child
By freakish fairy of the wild ;
Of sheeted ghost, that had revealed
Dark deeds of guilt from man concealed ;
Of boding dreams, of wandering spright,
Of dead-lights glimmering through the night.
Yea, every tale of ruth or weir,
Could waken pity, love, or fear,
Were decked anew, with anxious pain,
And sung to native airs again.

Alas ! those lays of fire once more
Are wrecked 'mid heaps of mouldering lore !
And feeble he who dares presume
That heavenly wake-light to relume.
But, grieved the legendary lay
Should perish from our land for ay,
While sings the lark above the wold,
And all his flocks rest in the fold,

Fondly he strikes, beside the pen,
The harp of Yarrow's braken glen.

December came ; his aspect stern
Glared deadly o'er the mountain cairn ;
A polar sheet was round him flung,
And ice-spears at his girdle hung ;
O'er frigid field, and drifted cone,
He strode undaunted and alone ;
Or, throned amid the Grampians gray,
Kept thaws and suns of heaven at bay.

Not stern December's fierce controul
Could quench the flame of minstrel's soul :
Little recked they, our bards of old,
Of Autumn's showers, or Winter's cold.
Sound slept they on the nighted hill,
Lulled by the winds or babbling rill :
Curtained within the Winter cloud ;
The heath their couch, the sky their shroud.

Yet their's the strains that touch the heart,
Bold, rapid, wild, and void of art.

Unlike the bards, whose milky lays
Delight in these degenerate days:
Their crystal spring, and heather brown,
Is changed to wine and couch of down;
Effeminate as lady gay,—
Such as the bard, so is his lay!

But then was seen, from every vale,
Through drifting snows and rattling hail,
Each Caledonian minstrel true,
Dressed in his plaid and bonnet blue,
With harp across his shoulders slung,
And music murmuring round his tongue,
Forcing his way, in raptures high,
To Holyrood his skill to try.

Ah! when at home the songs they raised,
When gaping rustics stood and gazed,

Each bard believed, with ready will,
Unmatched his song, unmatched his skill
But when the royal halls appeared,
Each aspect changed, each bosom feared ;
And when in court of Holyrood
Filed harps and bards around him stood,
His eye emitted cheerless ray,
His hope, his spirit sunk away :
There stood the minstrel, but his mind
Seemed left in native glen behind.

Unknown to men of sordid heart,
What joys the poet's hopes impart ;
Unknown, how his high soul is torn
By cold neglect, or canting scorn :
That meteor torch of mental light,
A breath can quench, or kindle bright.
Oft has that mind, which braved serene
The shafts of poverty and pain,
The Summer toil, the Winter blast,
Fallen victim to a frown at last.

Easy the boon he asks of thee ;
O, spare his heart in courtesy !

There rolled each bard his anxious eye,
Or strode his adversary bye.
No cause was there for names to scan,
Each minstrel's plaid bespoke his clan ;
And the blunt Borderer's plain array,
The bonnet broad and blanket gray.
Bard sought of bard a look to steal ;
Eyes measured each from head to heel.
Much wonder rose, that men so famed,
Men save with rapture never named,
Looked only so,—they could not tell,—
Like other men, and scarce so well.
Though keen the blast, and long the way,
When twilight closed that dubious day,
When round the table all were set,
Small heart had they to talk or eat ;
Red look askance, blunt whisper low,
Awkward remark, uncourtly bow,

Were all that past in that bright throng,
That group of genuine sons of song.

One did the honours of the board,
Who seemed a courtier or a lord.
Strange his array and speech withal,
Gael deemed him southern—southern, Gael.
Courteous his mien, his accents weak,
Lady in manner as in make ;
Yet round the board a whisper ran,
That that same gay and simpering man
A minstrel was of wondrous fame,
Who from a distant region came,
To bear the prize beyond the sea
To the green shores of Italy.

The wine was served, and, sooth to say,
Insensibly it stole away.
Thrice did they drain th' allotted store,
And wondering skinkers dun for more ;

Which vanished swifter than the first,—
Little weened they the poets' thirst.

Still as that ruddy juice they drained,
The eyes were cleared, the speech regained;
And latent sparks of fancy glowed,
Till one abundant torrent flowed,
Of wit, of humour, social glee,
Wild music, mirth, and revelry.

Just when a jest had thrilled the crowd,
Just when the laugh was long and loud,
Entered a squire with summons smart;—
That was the knell that pierced the heart:—
“The Court awaits;”—he bowed—was gone,—
Our bards sat changed to busts of stone.
As ever ye heard the green-wood dell,
On morn of June one warbled swell,
If burst the thunder from on high,
How hushed the woodland melody!

Even so our bards sunk at the view
Of what they wished, and what they knew.

Their numbers given, the lots were cast,
To fix the names of first and last ;
Then to the dazzling hall were led,
Poor minstrels less alive than dead.

There such a scene entranced the view,
As heart of poet never knew.

'Twas not the flash of golden gear,
Nor blaze of silver chandelier ;
Not Scotland's chiefs of noble air,
Nor dazzling rows of ladies fair ;
'Twas one enthroned the rest above,—
Sure 'twas the Queen of grace and love !
Taper the form, and fair the breast
Yon radiant golden zones invest,
Where the vexed rubies blench in death,
Beneath yon lips and balmy breath.

Coronal gems of every dye,
Look dim above yon beaming eye ;
Yon cheeks outvie the dawning's glow,
Red shadowed on a wreath of snow.

Oft the rapt bard had thought alone,
Of charms by mankind never known ;
Of virgins, pure as opening day,
Or bosom of the flower of May :
Oft dreamed of beings free from stain,
Of maidens of the emerald main,
Of fairy dames in grove at even,
Of angels in the walks of heaven :
But, nor in earth, the sea, nor sky,
In fairy dream, nor fancy's eye,
Vision his soul had ever seen
Like MARY STUART, Scotland's Queen.

THE
QUEEN'S WAKE.
QUEEN'S WAKE.



NIGHT THE FIRST.

THE

QUEEN'S WAKE.

NIGHT THE FIRST.

HUSHED was the Court—the courtiers gazed—
Each eye was bent, each soul amazed,
To see that group of genuine worth,
Those far-famed Minstrels of the North.
So motley wild their garments seemed ;
Their eyes, where tints of madness gleamed,
Fired with impatience every breast,
And expectation stood confest.

Short was the pause ; the stranger youth,
The gaudy minstrel of the south,
Whose glossy eye and lady form
Had never braved the northern storm,
Stepped lightly forth,—kneeled three times low,—
And then, with many a smile and bow,
Mounted the form amid the ring,
And rung his harp's responsive string.
Though true the chords, and mellow-toned,
Long, long he twisted, long he coned ;
Well pleased to hear his name they knew ;
“ 'Tis Rizzio !” round in whispers flew.

Valet with Parma's knight he came,
An angler in the tides of fame ;
And oft had tried, with anxious pain,
Respect of Scotland's Queen to gain.
Too well his eye, with searching art,
Perceived her fond, her wareless heart ;
And though unskilled in Scottish song,
Her notice he had wooed so long ;

With pain by night, and care by day,

He framed this fervid, flowery lay.—

Malcolm of Lorn.

THE FIRST BARD'S SONG.

I.

Came ye by Ora's verdant steep,

That smiles the restless ocean over?

Heard ye a suffering maiden weep?

Heard ye her name a faithful lover?

Saw ye an aged matron stand

O'er yon green grave above the strand,

Bent like the trunk of withered tree,

Or yon old thorn that sips the sea?

Fixed her dim eye, her face as pale

As the mists that o'er her flew:

Her joy is fled like the flower of the vale,

Her hope like the morning dew!

That matron was lately as proud of her stay,

As the mightiest monarch of sceptre or sway:

O list to the tale ! 'tis a tale of soft sorrow,
Of Malcolm of Lorn, and young Ann of Glen-Ora.

II.

The sun is sweet at early morn,
Just blushing from the ocean's bosom ;
The rose that decks the woodland thorn
Is fairest in its opening blossom.
Sweeter than opening rose in dew,
Than vernal flowers of richest hue,
Than fragrant birch or weeping willow,
Than red sun resting on the billow ;
Sweeter than aught to mortals given
The heart and soul to prove ;
Sweeter than aught beneath the heaven,
The joys of early love !
Never did maiden, and manly youth,
Love with such fervor, and love with such truth ;
Or pleasures and virtues alternately borrow,
As Malcolm of Lorn, and fair Ann of Glen-Ora.

III.

The day is come, the dreaded day,

Must part two loving hearts for ever ;

The ship lies rocking in the bay,

The boat comes rippling up the river :

O happy has the gloaming's eye

In green Glen-Ora's bosom seen them !

But soon shall lands and nations lie,

And angry oceans roll between them.

Yes, they must part, for ever part ;

Chill falls the truth on either heart ;

For honour, titles, wealth, and state,

In distant lands her sire await.

The maid must with her sire away,

She cannot stay behind ;

Straight to the south the pennons play,

And steady is the wind.

Shall Malcolm relinquish the home of his youth,

And sail with his love to the lands of the south ?

Ah, no ! for his father is gone to the tomb :

One parent survives in her desolate home !

No child but her Malcolm to cheer her lone way :
Break not her fond heart, gentle Malcolm, O,
stay !

IV.

The boat impatient leans ashore,
Her prow sleeps on a sandy pillow ;
The rower leans upon his oar,
Already bent to brush the billow.
O ! Malcolm, view yon melting eyes,
With tears yon stainless roses steeping !
O ! Malcolm, list thy mother's sighs ;
She's leaning o'er her staff and weeping !
Thy Anna's heart is bound to thine,
And must that gentle heart repine !
Quick from the shore the boat must fly ;
Her soul is speaking through her eye :
Think of thy joys in Ora's shade ;
From Anna canst thou sever ?
Think of the vows thou often hast made,
To love the dear maiden for ever.

And canst thou forego such beauty and youth,
Such maiden honour and spotless truth?
Forbid it!—He yields; to the boat he draws nigh.
Haste Malcolm aboard, and revert not thine eye.

V.

That trembling voice, in murmurs weak,
Comes not to blast the hopes before thee;
For pity, Malcolm, turn, and take
A last farewell of her that bore thee.
She says no word to mar thy bliss;
A last embrace, a parting kiss,
Her love deserves;—then be thou gone;
A mother's joys are thine alone.
Friendship may fade, and fortune prove
Deceitful to thy heart;
But never can a mother's love
From her own offspring part.
That tender form, now bent and gray,
Shall quickly sink to her native clay;

Then who shall watch her parting breath,
And shed a tear o'er her couch of death?
Who follow the dust to its long long home,
And lay that head in an honoured tomb?

VI.

Oft hast thou, to her bosom prest,
For many a day about been borne;
Oft hushed and craddled on her breast,
And canst thou leave that breast forlorn?
O'er all thy ails her heart has bled;
Oft has she watched beside thy bed;
Oft prayed for thee in dell at even,
Beneath the pitying stars of Heaven.
Ah! Malcolm, ne'er was parent yet
So tender, so benign!
Never was maid so loved, so sweet,
Nor soul so rent as thine!
He looked to the boat,—slow she heaved from the
shore;
He saw his loved Anna all speechless implore:

But, grasped by a cold and a trembling hand,
He clung to his parent, and sunk on the strand.

VII.

The boat across the tide flew fast,
And left a silver curve behind ;

Loud sung the sailor from the mast,
Spreading his sails before the wind.

The stately ship, adown the bay,

A corslet framed of heaving snow,
And flurred on high the slender spray,

Till rainbows gleamed around her prow.
How strained was Malcolm's watery eye,

Yon fleeting vision to descry !

But, ah ! her lessening form so fair,

Soon vanished in the liquid air.

Away to Ora's headland steep

The youth retired the while,

And saw th' un pitying vessel sweep

Around yon Highland isle.

His heart and his mind with that vessel had gone;
His sorrow was deep, and despairing his moan,
When, lifting his eyes from the green heaving
 deep,
He prayed the Almighty his Anna to keep.

VIII.

High o'er the crested cliffs of Lorn
 The curlew coned her wild bravura;
The sun, in pall of purple borne,
 Was hastening down the steeps of Jura.
The glowing ocean heaved her breast,
 Her wandering lover's glances under;
And showed his radiant form, imprest
 Deep in a wavy world of wonder.
Not all the ocean's dyes at even,
Though varied as the bow of heaven;
The countless isles so dusky blue,
Nor medley of the gray curlew,
Could light on Malcolm's spirit shed;

Their glory all was gone !
For his joy was fled, his hope was dead,
And his heart forsaken and lone.
The sea-bird sought her roofless nest,
To warm her brood with her downy breast ;
And near her home, on the margin dun,
A mother weeps o'er her duteous son.

IX.

One little boat alone is seen
On all the lovely dappled main,
That softly sinks the waves between,
Then vaults their heaving breasts again
With snowy sail, and rower's sweep,
Across the tide she seems to fly.
Why bears she on yon headland steep,
Where neither house nor home is nigh ?
Is that a vision from the deep
That springs ashore and scales the steep,
Nor ever stays its ardent haste
Till sunk upon young Malcolm's breast ?

O! spare that breast so lowly laid,
So fraught with deepest sorrow!
It is his own, his darling maid,
Young Anna of Glen-Ora!—
“My Malcolm! part we ne’er again!
My father saw thy bosom’s pain;
Pitied my grief from thee to sever;
Now I, and Glen-Ora, am thine for ever!”—

X.

That blaze of joy, through clouds of woe,
Too fierce upon his heart did fall.
But ah! the shaft had left the bow,
Which power of man could not recall!
No word of love could Malcolm speak;
No raptured kiss his lips impart;
No tear bedewed his shivering cheek,
To ease the grasp that held his heart.
His arms essayed one kind embrace—
Will they enclose her? never! never!

A smile set softly on his face,
But ah ! the eye was set for ever !—
'Twas more than broken heart could brook !
How throbs that breast !—How glazed that look !
One shiver more !—All ! all is o'er !—
As melts the wave on level shore ;
As fades the dye of falling even,
Far on the silver verge of heaven ;
As on thy ear, the minstrel's lay,—
So died the comely youth away."

The strain died soft in note of woe,
Nor breath nor whisper 'gan to flow
From courtly circle ; all as still
As midnight on the lonely hill.
So well that foreign minstrel's strain
Had mimicked passion, woe, and pain ;
Seemed even the chilly hand of death
Stealing away his mellow breath.
So sighed—so stopp'd—so died his lay,—
His spirit too seemed fled for ay.

'Tis true, the gay attentive throng
Admired, but loved not much, his song:
Admired his wonderous voice and skill,
His harp that thrilled or wept at will.
But that affected gaudy rhyme,
The querulous keys, and changing chime,
Scarce could the Highland chieftain brook:
Disdain seemed kindling in his look,
That song so vapid, artful, terse,
Should e'er compete with Scottish verse.

But she, the fairest of the fair,
Who sat enthroned in gilded chair,
Well skilled in foreign minstrelsy
And artful airs of Italy,
Listened his song, with raptures wild,
And on the happy minstrel smiled.
Soon did the wily stranger's eye
The notice most he wished espy,
Then poured his numbers bold and free,
Fired by the grace of majesty;

And when his last notes died away,
When sunk in well-feigned death he lay,
When round the crowd began to ring,
Thinking his spirit on the wing,—
First of the dames she came along,
Wept, sighed, and marvelled 'mid the throng.
And when they raised him, it was said
The beauteous Sovereign deigned her aid ;
And in her hands, so soft and warm,
Upheld the minstrel's hand and arm.
Then oped his eye with rapture fired ;
He smiled, and bowing oft, retired ;
Pleased he so soon had realized,
What more than gold or fame he prized.

Next in the list was Gardyn's name :
No sooner called, than forth he came.
Stately he strode, nor bow made he,
Nor even a look of courtesy.
The simpering cringe, and fawning look,
Of him who late the lists forsook,

Roused his proud heart, and fired his eye,
That glowed with native dignity.

Full sixty years the bard had seen,
Yet still his manly form and mien,
His garb of ancient Caledon,
Where lines of silk and scarlet shone,
And golden garters 'neath his knee,
Announced no man of mean degree.

Upon his harp, of wonderous frame,
Was carved his lineage and his name.
There stood the cross that name above,
Fair emblem of almighty love ;
Beneath rose an embossment proud,—
A rose beneath a thistle bowed.

Lightly upon the form he sprung,
And his bold harp impetuous rung.
Not one by one the chords he tried,
But brushed them o'er from side to side,

With either hand, so rapid, loud,
Shook were the halls of Holyrood.
Then in a mellow tone, and strong,
He poured this wild and dreadful song.—

Young Kennedy.

THE SECOND BARD'S SONG.

I.

When the gusts of October had rifled the thorn,
Had dappled the woodland, and umbered the plain,
In den of the mountain was Kennedy born :
There hushed by the tempest, baptized with the rain.
His cradle, a mat that swung light on the oak ;
His couch, the sear mountain-fern, spread on the rock ;
The white knobs of ice from the chilled nipple hung,
And loud winter-torrents his lullaby sung.

II.

Unheeded he shivered, unheeded he cried ;
Soon died on the breeze of the forest his moan.
To his wailings, the weary wood-echo replied ;
His watcher, the wondering redbreast alone.

Oft gazed his young eye on the whirl of the storm,
And all the wild shades that the desert deform ;
From cleft in the correi, which thunders had riven,
It oped on the pale flitting billows of heaven.

III.

The nursling of misery, young Kennedy, learned
His hunger, his thirst, and his passions to feed :
With pity for others his heart never yearned,—
Their pain was his pleasure,—their sorrow his meed.
His eye was the eagle's, the twilight his hue ;
His stature like pine of the hill where he grew ;
His soul was the neal-fire, inhaled from his den,
And never knew fear, save for ghost of the glen.

IV.

His father a chief, for barbarity known,
Proscribed, and by gallant Macdougald expelled ;
Where rolls the dark Teith through the valley of Down,
The conqueror's menial, he toiled in the field.

His master he loved not, obeyed with a scowl,
Scarce smothered his hate, and his rancour of soul;
When challenged, his eye and his colour would change,
His proud bosom nursing and planning revenge.

V.

Matilda, ah! woe that the wild rose's dye,
Shed over thy maiden cheek, caused thee to rue!
O! why was the sphere of thy love-rolling eye,
Inlaid with the diamond, and dipt in the dew!
Thy father's sole daughter; his hope, and his care;
The child of his age, and the child of his prayer;
And thine was the heart, that was gentle and kind,
And light as the feather, that sports in the wind.

VI.

To her home, from the Lowlands, Matilda returned;
All fair was her form, and untainted her mind.
Young Kennedy saw her, his appetite burned
As fierce as the moor-flame impelled by the wind.

Was it love? No; the ray his dark soul never knew,
That spark which eternity burns to renew.
'Twas the flash of desire, kindled fierce by revenge,
Which savages feel the brown desert that range.

VII.

Sweet woman! too well is thy tenderness known;
Too often deep sorrow succeeds thy love smile;
Too oft, in a moment, thy peace overthrown,—
Fair butt of delusion, of passion, and guile!
What heart will not bleed for Matilda so gay,
To art and to long perseverance a prey?
Why sings yon scared blackbird in sorrowful mood?
Why blushes the daisy deep in the green-wood?

VIII.

Sweet woman! with virtue, thou'rt lofty, thou'rt free;
Yield that, thou'rt a slave, and the mark of disdain:
No blossom of spring is beleagured like thee,
Though brushed by the lightning, the wind, and the rain.

Matilda is fallen ! With tears in her eye,
She seeks her destroyer ; but only can sigh.
Matilda is fallen, and sorrow her doom,—
The flower of the valley is nipt in the bloom !

IX.

Ah ! Kennedy, vengeance hangs over thine head !
Escape to thy native Glengary forlorn.
Why art thou at midnight away from thy bed ?
Why quakes thy big heart at the break of the morn ?
Why chatters yon magpie on gable so loud ?
Why flits yon light vision in gossamer shroud ?
How came yon white doves from the window to fly,
And hover on weariless wing to the sky ?

X.

Yon pie is the prophet of terror and death ;
O'er Abel's green arbour that omen was given.
Yon pale boding phantom, a messenger wraith ;
Yon doves, two fair angels commissioned of heaven.

The sun is in state, and the reapers in motion ;
Why were they not called to their morning devotion ?
Why slumbers Macdougall so long in his bed ?
Ah ! pale on his couch the old chieftain lies dead !

XI.

Though grateful the hope to the death-bed that flies,
That lovers and friends o'er our ashes will weep ;
The soul, when released from her lingering ties,
In secret may see if their sorrows are deep.
Who wept for the worthy Macdougall ?—Not one !
His darling Matilda, who, two months ago,
Would have mourned for her father in sorrow extreme,
Indulged in a painful delectable dream.

XII.

But, why do the matrons, while dressing the dead,
Sit silent, and look as of something they knew ?
Why gaze on the features ? Why move they the head,
And point at the bosom so dappled and blue ?

Say, was there foul play?—Then, why sleeps the red thunder?
Ah! hold, for Suspicion stands silent with wonder.
The body's entomb'd, and the green turf laid over,—
Matilda is wed to her dark Highland lover.

XIII.

Yes, the new moon that stooped over green Aberfoyle,
And shed her light dews on a father's new grave,
Beheld, in her wane, the gay wedding turmoil,
And lighted the bride to her chamber at eve:
Blue, blue was the heaven; and, o'er the wide scene,
A vapoury silver veil floated serene,
A fairy perspective, that bore from the eye
Wood, mountain, and meadow, in distance to lie.

XIV.

The scene was so still, it was all like a vision;
The lamp of the moon seemed as fading for ever.
'Twas awfully soft, without shade or elision;
And nothing was heard, but the rush of the river.

But why wont the bride-maidens walk on the lea,
Nor lovers steal out to the sycamore tree ?
Why turn to the hall with those looks of confusion ?
There's nothing abroad !—'tis a dream !—a delusion !

XV.

But why do the horses snort over their food,
And cling to the manger in seeming dismay ?
What scares the old owlet afar to the wood ?
Why screams the blue heron, as hastening away ?
Say, why is the dog hid so deep in his cover ?
Each window barred up, and the curtain drawn over ;
Each white maiden bosom still heaving so high,
And fix'd on another each fear-speaking eye ?

XVI.

'Tis all an illusion ! the lamp let us trim !
Come, rouse thee, old minstrel, to strains of renown ;
The old cup is empty, fill round to the brim,
And drink the young pair to their chamber just gone.

Ha ! why is the cup from the lip ta'en away ?
Why fix'd every form like a statue of clay ?
Say, whence is that noise and that horrible clamour ?
Oh, heavens ! it comes from the marriage bedchamber.

XVII.

O ! haste thee Strath-Allan, Glen-Ogle, away,
These outcries betoken wild horror and woe ;
The dull ear of midnight is stunned with dismay ;
Glen-Ogle ! Strath-Allan ! fly swift as the roe.
Mid darkness and death, on eternity's brim,
You stood with Macdonald and Archbald the grim ;
Then why do you hesitate ? why do you stand
With claymore unsheathed, and red taper in hand ?

XVIII.

The tumult is o'er ; not a murmur nor groan ;
What footsteps so madly pace through the saloon ?
'Tis Kennedy, naked and ghastly alone,
Who hies him away by the light of the moon.

All prostrate and bleeding, Matilda they found,
The threshold her pillow, her couch the cold ground ;
Her features distorted, her colour the clay,
Her feelings, her voice, and her reason away.

XIX.

Ere morn they returned ; but how well had they never !
They brought with them horror too deep to sustain ;
Returned but to chasten, and vanish for ever,
To harrow the bosom and fever the brain.
List, list to her tale, youth, levity, beauty ;—
O ! sweet is the path of devotion and duty !—
When pleasure smiles sweetest, dread danger and death,
And think of Matilda, the flower of the Teith.

XX.

The Bride's Tale.

“ I had just laid me down, but no word could I pray ;
I had pillowed my head, and drawn up the bed-cover ;
I thought of the bed where my loved father lay,
So damp and so cold, with the grass growing over.

I turned to my husband ; but just as he spread
His arms to enfold me, we saw round the bed,
A ghastly refulgence as bright as day-noon,
Though shut was the chamber from eye of the moon.

XXI.

“ Bestower of being ! in pity, O ! hide
That sight from the eye of my spirit for ever ;
That page from the volume of memory divide,
Or memory and being eternally sever !
My father approached ; our bed-curtains he drew ;
Ah ! well the gray locks and pale features I knew.
I saw his fixt eye-balls indignantly glow ;
Yet still in that look there was pity and woe.

XXII.

“ O ! hide thee, my daughter, he eagerly cried ;
O haste from the bed of that parricide lover !
Embrace not thy husband, unfortunate bride,
Thy red cup of misery already runs over.

He strangled thy father ! thy guilt paved the way ;
Thy heart yet is blameless, O fly while you may !
Thy portion of life must calamity leaven ;
But fly while there's hope of forgiveness from heaven.

XXIII.

“ And thou, fell destroyer of virtue and life !
O ! well may'st thou quake at thy terrible doom ;
For body or soul, with barbarity rife,
On earth is no refuge, in heaven no room.
Fly whither thou wilt, I will follow thee still,
To dens of the forest, or mists of the hill ;
The task I'm assigned, which I'll never forego,
But chace thee from earth to thy dwelling below.

XXIV.

“ The cave shall not cover, the cloud shall not hide thee ;
At noon I will wither thy sight with my frown ;
In gloom of the night, I will lay me beside thee,
And pierce with this weapon thy bosom of stone.

Fast fled the despoiler with howlings most dire,
Fast followed the spirit with rapier of fire ;—
Away, and away, through the silent saloon,
And away, and away, by the light of the moon.

XXV.

“ To follow I tried, but sunk down at the door.

Alas ! from that trance that I ever awoke.

How wanders my mind ! I shall see him no more,

Till God shall yon gates everlasting unlock.

My poor brow is open, 'tis burning with pain,

O kiss it, sweet vision ! O kiss it again !

Now give me thine hand ; I will fly ! I will fly !

Away, on the morn's dappled wing, to the sky.”

XXVI.

The Conclusion.

O ! shepherd of Braco, look well to thy flock,

The piles of Glen-Ardochy murmur and jar ;

The rook and the raven converse from the rock,

The beasts of the forest are howling afar.

Shrill pipes the goss-hawk his dire tidings to tell,
The gray mountain-falcon accords with his yell ;
Aloft on bold pinion the eagle is borne,
To ring the alarm at the gates of the morn.

XXVII.

Ah ! shepherd, thy kids wander safe in the wood,
Thy lambs feed in peace on Ben-Ardochy's brow ;
'Then why is the hoary cliff sheeted with blood ?
And what the poor carcase lies mangled below ?
Oh hie thee away to thy hut at the fountain,
And dig a lone grave on the top of yon mountain ;
But fly it for ever when falls the gray gloaming,
For there a grim phantom still naked is roaming.

Gardyn with stately step withdrew,
While plaudits round the circle flew.

Woe that the bard, whose thrilling song
Has poured from age to age along,
Should perish from the lists of fame,
And lose his only boon, a name.

Yet many a song of wonderous power,
Well known in cot and green-wood bower,
Wherever swells the shepherd's reed
On Yarrow's banks and braes of Tweed;
Yes, many a song of olden time,
Of rude array, and air sublime,
Though long on time's dark whirlpool tossed,
The song is saved, the bard is lost.

Yet have I weened, when these I sung
On Ettrick banks, while mind was young;
When on the eve their strains I threw,
And youths and maidens round me drew;
Or chaunted in the lonely glen,
Far from the haunts and eyes of men;
Yes, I have weened, with fondest sigh,
The spirit of the bard was nigh;
Swung by the breeze on braken pile,
Or hovering o'er me with a smile.
Would Fancy still her dreams combine,
That spirit, too, might breath on mine;

Well pleased to see her songs the joy
Of that poor lonely shepherd boy.

'Tis said, and I believe the tale,
That many rhymes which still prevail,
Of genuine ardour, bold and free,
Were ay admired, and ay will be,
Had never been, or shortly stood,
But for that Wake at Holyrood.
Certes that many a bard of name,
Who there appeared and strove for fame,
No record names, nor minstrel's tongue;
Not even are known the lays they sung.

The fifth was from a western shore,
Where rolls the dark and sullen Orr.
Of peasant make, and doubtful mien,
Affecting airs of proud disdain;
Wide curled his raven locks and high,
Dark was his visage, dark his eye,

That glanced around on dames and men
Like falcons on the cliffs of Ken.
No one could read the character,
If *knave* or *genius* writ was there ;
But all supposed, from mien and frame,
From Erin he an exile came.

With hollow voice, and harp well strung,
“ Fair Margaret” was the song he sung,
Well known to maid and matron gray,
Through all the glens of Galloway.
When first the bard his song began,
Of dreams and bodings hard to scan,
Listened the Court, with sidelong bend,
In wonder how the strain would end.
But long ere that, it grew so plain,
They scarce from hooting could refrain ;
And when the minstrel ceased to sing,
A smothered hiss ran round the ring.
Red looked our bard around the form,
With eye of fire, and face of storm ;

Sprung to his seat, with awkward leap,
And muttered curses dark and deep.

The sixth, too, from that country he,
Where heath-cocks bay o'er western Dee ;
Where Summer spreads her purple screen
O'er moors, where greensward ne'er was seen ;
Nor shade, o'er all the prospect stern,
Save crusted rock, or warrior's cairn.

Gentle his form, his manners meet,
His harp was soft, his voice was sweet ;
He sung Lochryan's hapless maid,
In bloom of youth by love betrayed :
Turned from her lover's bower at last,
To brave the chilly midnight blast ;
And bitterer far, the pangs to prove,
Of ruined fame, and slighted love ;
A tender babe, her arms within,
Sobbing and " shivering at the chin."

No lady's cheek in Court was dry,
So softly poured the melody.

The eighth was from the Leven coast :
The rest who sung that night are lost.

Mounted the bard of Fife on high,
Bushy his beard, and wild his eye :
His haggard cheek was pale as clay,
And his thin locks were long and gray.
Some wizard of the wild he seemed,
Who through the scenes of life had dreamed,
Of spells that vital life benumb,
Of formless spirits wandering dumb,
Where aspens in the moon-beam quake,
By mouldering pile, or mountain lake.

He deemed that fays and spectres wan
Held converse with the thoughts of man ;
In dreams their future fates foretold,
And spread the death-flame on the wold ;

Or flagged at eve each restless wing,
In dells their vesper hymns to sing.

Such was our bard, such were his lays ;
And long by green Benarty's base,
His wild wood notes, from ivy cave,
Had waked the dawning from the wave.
At evening fall, in lonesome dale,
He kept strange converse with the gale ;
Held worldly pomp in high derision,
And wandered in a world of vision.

Of mountain ash his harp was framed,
The brazen chords all trembling flamed,
As in a rugged northern tongue,
This mad unearthly song he sung.

The Witch of Fife.

THE EIGHTH BARD'S SONG.

“ Quhare haif ye been, ye ill womyne,
These three lang nightis fra hame?
Quhat garris the sweit drap fra yer brow,
Like clotis of the saut sea faem?

It fearis me muckil ye haif seen
Quhat good man never knew;
It fearis me muckil ye haif been
Quhare the gray cock never crew.

But the spell may crack, and the brydel breck,
Then sherpe yer werde will be;
Ye had better sleipe in yer bed at hame,
Wi yer deire littil bairnis and me.”—

‘ Sit dune, sit dune, my leile auld man,
Sit dune, and listin to me ;
I’ll gar the hayre stand on yer crown,
And the cauld sweit blind yer e’e.

But tell nae wordis, my gude auld man,
Tell never word again ;
Or deire shall be yer courtiſye,
And driche and sair yer pain.

The first leet-night, quhan the new moon set,
Quhan all was douffe and mirk,
We saddled our naigis wi the moon-fern leif,
And rode fra Kilmerrin kirk.

Some horses ware of the brume-cow framit,
And some of the greine bay tree ;
But mine was made of ane humloke ſchaw,
And a stout ſtallion was he.

We raide the tod doune on the hill,

The martin on the law ;

And we huntyd the hoolet out of brethe,

And forcit him doune to fa.—

“ Quhat guid was that, ye ill womyn ?

Quhat guid was that to thee ?

Ye wald better haif bein in yer bed at hame,

Wi yer deire littil bairnis and me.”—

‘ And ay we raide, and se merrily we raide,

Throw the merkist gloffis of the night ;

And we swam the floode, and we darnit the woode,

Till we cam to the Lommond height.

And quhen we cam to the Lommond height,

Se lythlye we lychtid doune ;

And we drank fra the hornis that never grew,

The beer that was never browin.

Than up there rase ane wee wee man,
Franethe the moss-gray stane ;
His fece was wan like the collifloure,
For he nouthir had blude nor bane.

He set ane reid-pipe till his muthe,
And he playit se bonnilye,
Till the grey curlew, and the black-cock, flew
To listen his melodye.

It rang se sweet through the green Lommond,
That the nycht-winde lowner blew ;
And it soupit alang the Loch Leven,
And wakinit the white sea-mew.

It rang se sweet through the grein Lommond,
Se sweetly butt and se shill,
That the wezilis laup out of their mouldy holis,
And dancit on the mydnycht hill.

The corby craw cam gledgin near,
The ern gede veeryng bye;
And the troutis laup out of the Leven Louch,
Charmit with the melodye.

And ay we dancit on the green Lommond,
Till the dawn on the ocean grew:
Ne wonder I was a weary wycht
Quhan I cam hame to you.'—

“ Quhat guid, quhat guid, my weird weird wyfe,
Quhat guid was that to thee?
Ye wald better haif bein in yer bed at hame,
Wi yer deire littil bairnis and me.”—

‘ The second nychte, quhan the new moon set,
O'er the roaryng sea we flew;
The cockle-shell our trusty bark,
Our sailis of the grein sea-rue.

And the bauld windis blew, and the fire flauchtis
flew,

And the sea ran to the skie;
And the thunner it growlit, and the sea dogs howlit,
As we gaed scouryng bye.

And 'ay we mountit the sea green hillis,
Quhill we brushit thro' the cludis of the hevin;
Than sousit downright like the stern-shot light,
Fra the liftis blue casement driven.

But our taickil stood, and our bark was good,
And se pang was our pearily prow;e;
Quhan we culdna speil the brow of the wavis,
We needilit them throu belowe.

As fast as the hail, as fast as the gale,
As fast as the midnycht leme,
We borit the breiste of the burstyng swale,
Or fluffit i' the flotyng faem.

And quhan to the Norraway shore we wan,
We muntyd our steedis of the wynd,
And we splashit the floode, and we darnit the
woode,
And we left the shouir behynde.

Fleet is the roe on the green Lommond,
And swift is the couryng grew ;
The rein deir dun can eithly run,
Quhan the houndis and the hornis pursue.

But nowther the roe, nor the rein-deir dun,
The hinde nor the couryng grew,
Culde fly ovr muntaine, muir, and dale,
As ovr brow steedis they flew.

The dales war deep, and the Doffrinis steep,
And we rase to the skyis ee-bree ;
Quhite, quhite was our rode, that was never trode,
Ovr the snawis of eternity !

And quhan we cam to the Lapland lone

The fairies war all in array,

For all the genii of the north

War keepyng their holeday.

The warlock men and the weerd wemyng,

And the fays of the wood and the steep,

And the phantom hunteris all war there,

And the mermaidis of the deep.

And they washit us all with the witch-water,

Distillit fra the moorland dew,

Quhill our beauty blumit like the Lapland rose,

That wylde in the foreste grew.—

“Ye lee, ye lee, ye ill womyne,

Se loud as I heir ye lee!

For the warst-faurd wyfe on the shoris of Fyfe

Is cumlye comparet wi thee.”—

‘ Then the mer-maidis sang and the woodlandis
rang,
Se sweetly swellit the quire ;
On every cliff a herpe they hang,
On every tree a lyre.

And ay they sang, and the woodlandis rang,
And we drank, and we drank se deep ;
Then soft in the armis of the warlock men,
We laid us dune to sleep.’—

“ Away, away, ye ill womyne,
An ill deide met ye dee !
Quhan ye hae pruvit se false to yer God,
Ye can never pruve trew to me.”—

‘ And there we lernit fra the fairy foke,
And fra our master true,
The wordis that can beire us throu the air,
And lökkis and baris undo.

Last nycht we met at Maisry's cot ;

Richt weil the wordis we knew ;

And we set a foot on the black cruik-shell,

And out at the lum we flew.

And we flew owr hill, and we flew owr dale,

And we flew owr firth and sea,

Until we cam to merry Carlisle,

Quhar we lightit on the lea.

We gaed to the vault beyound the towir,

Quhar we enterit free as ayr ;

And we drank, and we drank of the bishopis wine

Quhill we culde drynk ne mair.—

“ Gin that be trew, my gude auld wyfe,

Whilk thou hast tauld to me,

Betide my death, betide my lyfe,

I'll beire thee companye.

Neist tyme ye gaung to merry Carlisle

To drynk of the blude-reid wine,

Beshrew my heart, I'll fly with thee,

If the diel shulde fly behynde."—

' Ah ! little do ye ken, my silly auld man,

The daingeris we maun dree ;

Last nichte we drank of the bishopis wyne,

Quhill near near taen war we.

Afore we wan to the sandy ford,

The gor-cockis nichering flew ;

The lofty crest of Ettrick Pen

Was wavit about with blew,

And, flichtering throu the air, we fand

The chill chill mornyng dew.

As we flew ovr the hillis of Braid,

The sun rase fair and clear ;

There gurly James, and his baronis braw,

War out to hunt the deere.

Their bowis they drew, their arrowis flew,
And peircit the ayr with speede,
Quhill purpil fell the mornyng dew
With witch-blude rank and reide.

Littil do ye ken, my silly auld man,
The dangeris we maun dree ;
Ne wonder I am a weary wycht
Quhan I come hame to thee.”—

“ But tell me the *word*, my gude auld wyfe,
Come tell it me speedilye ;
For I lang to drink of the gude reide wyne,
And to wyng the ayr with thee.

Yer hellish horse I wilna ryde,
Nor sail the seas in the wynd ;
But I can flee as well as thee,
And I’ll drynk quhill ye be blynd.”—

‘O fy ! O fy ! my leil auld man,
That word I darena tell ;
It wald turn this warld all upside down,
And make it warse than hell.

For all the lasses in the land
Wald munt the wynd and fly ;
And the men wald doff their doublets syde,
And after them wald ply.’—

But the auld gudeman was ane cunningg auld man,
And ane cunningg auld man was he ;
And he watchit, and he watchit for mony a night,
The witches’ flychte to see.

Ane nychte he darnit in Maisry’s cot ;
The fearless haggs came in ;
And he heard the word of awsome weird,
And he saw their deedis of synn.

Then ane by ane, they said that word,
As fast to the fire they drew ;
Then set a foot on the black cruik-shell,
And out at the lum they flew.

The auld gude-man cam fra his hole
With feire and muckil dreide,
But yet he culdna think to rue,
For the wyne came in his head.

He set his foot in the black cruik-shell,
With ane fixit and ane wawlyng ee ;
And he said the word that I darena say,
And out at the lum flew he.

The witches skalit the moon-beam pale ;
Deep groanit the trembling wynde ;
But they never wist till our auld gude-man
Was hoveryng them behynde.

They flew to the vaultis of merry Carlisle,
 Quhair they enterit free as ayr ;
And they drank and they drank of the byshopis
 wyne
 Quhill they culde drynk ne mair.

The auld gude-man he grew se crouse,
 He dancit on the mouldy ground,
And he sang the bonniest sangis of Fife,
 And he tuzzlit the kerlyngs round.

And ay he percit the tither butt,
 And he suckit, and he suckit se lang,
Quhill his een they closit, and his voice grew low,
 And his tongue wold hardly gang.

The kerlyngs drank of the bishopis wyne
 Quhill they scentit the mornyng wynde ;
Then clove again the yeilding ayr,
 And left the auld man behynde.

And ay he slepit on the damp damp floor,
He slepit and he snorit amain ;
He never dremit he was far fra hame,
Or that the auld wyvis war gane.

And ay he slepit on the damp damp floor
Quhill past the mid-day highte,
Quhan wakenit by five rough Englishmen,
That trailit him to the lychte.

“ Now quha are ye, ye silly auld man,
That sleepis se sound and se weil ?
Or how gat ye into the bishopis vault
Throu lokkis and barris of steel ? ” —

The auld gude-man he tryit to speak,
But ane word he culdna fynde ;
He tryit to think, but his head whirlit round,
And ane thing he culdna mynde : —
“ I cam fra Fyfe,” the auld man cryit,
“ And I cam on the midnycht wynde.”

They nickit the auld man, and they prickit the
auld man,

And they yerkit his limbis with twine,
Quhill the reid blude ran in his hose and shoon,
But some cryit it was wyne.

They lickit the auld man, and they prickit the
auld man,

And they tyit him till ane stone;
And they set ane bele-fire him about,
And they burnit him skin and bone.

Now wae be to the puir auld man

That ever he saw the day!
And wae be to all the ill wemyng,
That lead puir men astray!

Let never ane auld man after this

To lawless greide inclyne;
Let never an auld man after this

Rin post to the diel for wyne.

When ceased the minstrel's crazy song,
His heedful glance embraced the throng,
And found the smile of free delight
Dimpling the cheeks of ladies bright.
Ah ! never yet was bard unmoved,
When beauty smiled or birth approved !
For though his song he holds at nought—
“ An idle strain ! a passing thought ! ”—
Child of the soul ! 'tis held more dear
Than aught by mortals valued here.

When Leven's bard the Court had viewed,
His eye, his vigour, was renewed.
No, not the evening's closing eye,
Veiled in the rainbow's deepest dye,
By summer breezes lulled to rest,
Cradled on Leven's silver breast,
Or slumbering on the distant sea,
Imparted sweeter ecstasy.

Nor even the angel of the night,
Kindling his holy sphere of light,
Afar upon the heaving deep,
To light a world of peaceful sleep,
Though in her beam night-spirits glanced,
And lovely fays in circles danced,
Or rank by rank rode lightly bye,
Was sweeter to our minstrel's eye.

Unheard the bird of morning crew ;
Unheard the breeze of Ocean blew ;
The night unweened had passed away,
And dawning ushered in the day.
The Queen's young maids, of cherub hue,
Aside the silken curtains drew,
And lo the Night, in still profound,
In fleece of heaven had clothed the ground ;
And still her furs, so light and fair,
Floated along the morning air.
Low stooped the pine amid the wood,
And the tall cliffs of Salisbury stood

Like marble columns bent and riven,
Propping a pale and frowning heaven.

The Queen bent from her gilded chair,
And waved her hand with graceful air :—
“ Break up the court, my lords; away,
And use the day as best you may,
In sleep, in love, or wassail cheer;
The day is dark, the evening near,
Say, will you grace my halls the while,
And in the dance the day beguile?
Break up the court, my lords; away,
And use the day as best you may.
Give order that my minstrels true
Have royal fare and honours due;
And warned by evening's bugle shrill,
We meet to judge their minstrel skill.”—

Whether that royal wake gave birth
To days of sleep and nights of mirth,

Which kings and courtiers still approve,
Which sages blame, and ladies love;
Imports not;—but our courtly throng,
(That chapel wake being kept so long,)
Slept out the lowering short-lived days,
And heard by night their native lays,
Till fell the eve of Christmas good,
The dedication of the rood.

Ah me! at routs and revels gay,
Reproach of this unthrifty day,
Though none amongst the dames or men
Rank higher than a citizen,
In chair or chariot all are borne,
Closed from the piercing eye of morn;
But then, though dawning blasts were keen,
Scotland's high dames you might have seen,
Ere from the banquet hall they rose,
Shift their laced shoes and silken hose;
Their brodered kirtles round them throw,
And wade their way through wreaths of snow,

Leaning on Lord or lover's arm,
Cheerful and reckless of all harm.
Vanished those hardy times outright ;
So is our ancient Scottish might.

Sweet be her home, admired her charms,
Bliss to her couch in lover's arms,
I bid in every minstrel's name,
I bid to every lovely dame,
That ever gave one hour away
To cheer the bard or list his lay !

To all who love the raptures high
Of Scottish song and minstrelsy,
Till next the night, in sable shroud,
Shall wrap the halls of Holyrood,
That rival minstrels' songs I borrow,—
I bid a hearty kind good-morrow.

END OF NIGHT THE FIRST.

THE
LADY OF THE WALES
QUEEN'S WAKE.

~~~~~  
NIGHT THE SECOND.



QUEEN'S WARE

THE

## QUEEN'S WAKE.

NIGHT THE SECOND.

---

SCARCE fled the dawning's dubious gray,  
So transient was that dismal day.  
The lurid vapours, dense and stern,  
Unpierced save by the crusted cairn,  
In ten-fold shroud the heavens deform;  
While far within the moving storm,  
Travelled the sun in lonely blue,  
And noontide wore a twilight hue.

The sprites that through the welkin wing,  
That light and shade alternate bring,  
That wrap the eve in dusky veil,  
And weave the morning's purple rail ;  
From pendent clouds of deepest grain,  
Shed that dull twilight o'er the main.  
Each spire, each tower, and cliff sublime,  
Were hooded in the wreathy rime ;  
And all, ere fell the murr of even,  
Were lost within the folds of heaven.  
It seemed as if the welkin's breast  
Had bowed upon the world to rest ;  
As heaven and earth to close began,  
And seal the destiny of man.

The supper bell at Court had rung ;  
The mass was said, the vesper sung ;  
In true devotion's sweetest mood,  
Beauty had kneeled before the rood ;  
But all was done in secret guise,  
Close from the zealot's searching eyes.

Then burst the bugle's lordly peal  
Along the earth's incumbent veil ;  
Swam on the cloud and lingering shower,  
To festive hall and lady's bower ;  
And found its way, with rapid boom,  
To rocks far curtained in the gloom,  
And waked their viewless bugle's strain,  
That sung the softened notes again.

Upsprung the maid from her love-dream ;  
The matron from her silken seam ;  
The abbot from his holy shrine ;  
The chiefs and warriors from their wine :  
For ay the bugle seemed to say,  
“ The Wake's begun ! away, away ! ”

Fast poured they in, all fair and boon,  
Till crowded was the grand saloon ;  
And scarce was left a little ring,  
In which the rival bards might sing.

First in the list that night to play,  
Was Farquhar, from the hills of Spey :  
A gay and comely youth was he,  
And seemed of noble pedigree.  
Well known to him Loch-Avin's shore,  
And all the dens of dark Glen-More ;  
Where oft, amid his roving clan,  
His shaft had pierced the ptarmigan ;  
And oft the dun-deer's velvet side  
That winged shaft had ruthless dyed,  
Had struck the heath-cock whirring high,  
And brought the eagle from the sky.

Amid those scenes the youth was bred,  
Where Nature's eye is stern and dread ;  
Mid forests dark, and caverns wild,  
And mountains above mountains piled,  
Whose hoary summits, tempest-riven,  
Uprear eternal snows to heaven.



Aloof from battle's fierce alarms,  
Prone his young mind to music's charms.  
The cliffs and woods of dark Glen-More  
He taught to chaunt in mystic lore ;  
For well he weened, by tarn and hill,  
Kind viewless spirits wandered still ;  
And fondly trowed the groups to spy,  
Listening his cliff-born melody.  
On Leven's bard with scorn he looked,  
His homely song he scarcely brooked ;  
But proudly mounting on the form,  
Thus sung *The Spirit of the Storm*.

### Glen-Avin.

#### THE NINTH BARD'S SONG.

Beyond the grizzly cliffs, which guard  
The infant rills of Highland Dee,  
Where hunter's horn was never heard,  
Nor bugle of the forest bee ;

Mid wastes that dorn and dreary lie,  
One mountain rears his mighty form,  
Disturbs the moon in passing bye,  
And smiles above the thunder storm.

There Avin spreads her ample deep,  
To mirror cliffs that brush the wain ;  
Whose frigid eyes eternal weep,  
In ' Summer suns and Autumn rain.

There matin hymn was never sung ;  
Nor vesper, save the plover's wail ;  
But mountain eagles breed their young,  
And aerial spirits ride the gale.

An hoary sage once lingered there,  
Intent to prove some mystic scene ;  
Though cavern deep, and forest sere,  
Had whooped November's boisterous reign.

That noontide fell so stern and still,  
The breath of nature seemed away ;  
The distant sigh of mountain rill  
Alone disturbed that solemn day.

Oft had that seer, at break of morn,  
Beheld the fahm glide o'er the fell ;  
And 'neath the new moon's silver horn,  
The fairies dancing in the dell.

Had seen the spirits of the Glen,  
In every form that Ossian knew ;  
And wailings heard for living men  
Were never more the light to view.

But, ah ! that dull forboding day,  
He saw what mortal could not bear ;  
A sight that scared the erne away,  
And drove the wild deer from his lair.

Firm in his magic ring he stood,  
When, lo ! aloft on gray Cairn-Gorm,  
A form appeared that chilled his blood,—  
The giant Spirit of the Storm.

His face was like the spectre wan,  
Slow gliding from the midnight isle ;  
His stature, on the mighty plan  
Of smoke-tower o'er the burning pile.

Red, red and grizzly were his eyes ;  
His cap the moon-cloud's silver gray ;  
His staff the writhed snake, that lies  
Pale, bending o'er the milky way.

He cried, " Away, begone, begone !  
Half-naked, hoary, feeble form !  
How darest thou hold my realms alone,  
And brave the Angel of the Storm ?"—

"And who art thou," the seer replied,

"That bear'st destruction on thy brow?

Whose eye no mortal can abide?

Dread mountain Spirit! what art thou?"—

"Within this desert, dank and lone,

Since rolled the world a shoreless sea,

I've held my elemental throne,

The terror of thy race and thee.

I wrap the sun of heaven in blood,

Veiling his orient beams of light;

And hide the moon in sable shroud,

Far in the alcove of the night.

I ride the red bolt's rapid wing,

High on the sweeping whirlwind sail,

And list to hear my tempests sing

Around Glen-Avin's ample wale.



These everlasting hills are riven ;  
    Their reverend heads are bald and gray ;  
The Greenland waves salute the heaven,  
    And quench the burning stars with spray.

Who was it reared those whelming waves ?  
    Who scalped the brows of old Cairn-Gorm ?  
And scooped these ever-yawning caves ?  
    'Twas I, the Spirit of the Storm.

And hence shalt thou, for evermore,  
    Be doomed to ride the blast with me ;  
To shriek, amid the tempest's roar,  
    By fountain, ford, and forest tree."—

The wizard cowered him to the earth,  
    And orisons of dread began :  
“ Hence, Spirit of infernal birth !  
    Thou enemy of God and man !”

He waved his sceptre north away,  
The arctic ring was rift asunder ;  
And through the heaven, the startling bray  
Burst louder than the loudest thunder.

The feathery clouds, condensed and curled,  
In columns swept the quaking glen ;  
Destruction down the dale was hurled,  
O'er bleating flocks, and wondering man.

The Grampians groaned beneath the storm ;  
New mountains o'er the correis lean'd ;  
Ben-Nevis shook his shaggy form,  
And wondered what his Sovereign mean'd.

Even far on Yarrow's fairy dale,  
The shepherd paused in dumb dismay ;  
And passing shrieks adown the vale,  
Lured many a pitying hind away.

The Lowthers felt the tyrant's wrath ;  
Proud Hartfell quaked beneath his brand ;  
And Cheviot heard the cries of death,  
Guarding his loved Northumberland.

But, O ! as fell that fateful night,  
What horrors Avin wilds deform,  
And choke the ghastly lingering light !  
There whirled the vortex of the storm.

Ere morn the wind grew deadly still,  
And dawning in the air, updrew,  
From many a shelve and shining hill,  
Her folding robe of fairy blue.

Then, what a smooth and wonderous scene  
Hung o'er Loch-Avin's lonely breast !  
Not top of tallest pine was seen,  
On which the dazzled eye could rest.

But mitred cliff, and crested fell,  
In lucid curls her brows adorn,  
Aloft the radiant crescents swell,  
All pure as robes by angels worn.

Sound sleeps our seer, far from the day,  
Beneath yon sleek and wreathed cone !  
His spirit steals, unmissed, away,  
And dreams across the desert lone.

Sound sleeps our seer ! the tempests rave,  
And cold sheets o'er his bosom fling ;  
The moldwarp digs his mossy grave ;  
His requiem Avin eagles sing.

Why howls the fox above yon wreath,  
That mocks the blazing Summer sun ?  
Why croaks the sable bird of death,  
As hovering o'er yon desert dun ?

When circling years have past away,  
And Summer blooms in Avin glen,  
Why stands yon peasant in dismay,  
Still gazing o'er the bloated den ?

Green grows the grass ! the bones are white !  
Not bones of mountain stag they seem !  
There hooted once the owl by night,  
Above the dead-light's lambent beam !

See yon lone cairn, so gray with age,  
Above the base of proud Cairn-Gorm :  
There lies the dust of Avin's sage,  
Who raised the Spirit of the Storm.

Yet still at eve, or midnight drear,  
When Wintry winds begin to sweep,  
When passing shrieks assail thine ear,  
Or murmurs by the mountain steep ;



When from the dark and sedgy dells  
Came eldrich cries of wildered men,  
Or wind-harp at thy window swells,—  
Beware the sprite of Avin Glen!

---

Young Farquhar ceased, and rising slow,  
Doffed his plumed bonnet, wiped his brow,  
And flushed with conscious dignity,  
Cast o'er the crowd his falcon eye,  
And found them all in silence deep,  
As listening for the tempest's sweep.  
So well his tale of Avin's seer  
Suited the rigour of the year;  
So high his strain, so bold his lyre,  
So fraught with rays of Celtic fire,  
They almost weened each hum that past  
The spirit of the northern blast.

The next was named,—the very sound  
Excited merriment around.

But when the bard himself appeared,  
The ladies smiled, the courtiers sneered;  
For such a simple air and mien  
Before a court had never been.  
A clown he was, bred in the wild,  
And late from native moors exiled,  
In hopes his mellow mountain strain  
High favour from the great would gain.  
Poor wight! he never weened how hard  
For poverty to earn regard!  
Dejection o'er his visage ran,  
His coat was bare, his colour wan,  
His forest doublet darned and torn,  
His shepherd plaid all rent and worn;  
Yet dear the symbols to his eye,  
Memorials of a time gone bye.

The bard on Ettrick's mountains green  
In Nature's bosom nursed had been,  
And oft had marked in forest lone  
Her beauties on her mountain throne;

Had seen her deck the wild-wood tree,  
And star with snowy gems the lea ;  
In loveliest colours paint the plain,  
And sow the moor with purple grain.  
By golden mead and mountain sheer,  
Had viewed the Ettrick waving clear,  
Where shadowy flocks of purest snow  
Seemed grazing in a world below.

Instead of Ocean's billowy pride,  
Where monsters play and navies ride,  
Oft had he viewed, as morning rose,  
The bosom of the lonely Lowes,  
Plowed far by many a downy keel,  
Of wild-duck and of vagrant teal.  
Oft thrilled his heart at close of even,  
To see the dappled vales of heaven,  
With many a mountain, moor, and tree,  
Asleep upon the Saint Mary.  
The pilot swan majestic wind,  
With all his cygnet fleet behind,

So softly sail, and swiftly row,  
With sable oar and silken prow.  
Instead of war's unhallowed form,  
His eye had seen the thunder storm  
Descend within the mountain's brim,  
And shroud him in its chambers grim.  
Then from its bowels burst amain  
The sheeted flame and sounding rain,  
And by the bolts in thunder borne,  
The heaven's own breast and mountain torn.  
The wild roe from the forest driven ;  
The oaks of ages peeled and riven ;  
Impending oceans whirl and boil,  
Convulsed by Nature's grand turmoil.

Instead of arms or golden crest,  
His harp with mimic flowers was drest :  
Around, in graceful streamers, fell  
The briar-rose and the heather bell ;  
And there his learning deep to prove,  
*Naturæ Donum* graved above.

When o'er her mellow notes he ran,  
And his wild mountain chaunt began;  
Then first was noted in his eye,  
A gleam of native energy.

### Old David.

#### THE TENTH BARD'S SONG.

Old David rose ere it was day,  
And climbed old Wonfell's wizard brae;  
Looked round, with visage grim and sour,  
O'er Ettrick woods and Eskdale-moor.  
An outlaw from the south he came,  
And Ludlow was his father's name;  
His native land had used him ill,  
And Scotland bore him no good will.

As fixed he stood, in sullen scorn,  
Regardless of the streaks of morn,  
Old David spied, on Wonfell cone,  
A fairy band come riding on.



A lovelier troop was never seen ;  
Their steeds were white, their doublets green,  
Their faces shone like opening morn,  
And bloomed like roses on the thorn.  
At every flowing mane was hung,  
A silver bell that lightly rung ;  
That sound, borne on the breeze away,  
Oft set the mountaineer to pray.

Old David crept close in the heath,  
Scarce moved a limb, scarce drew a breath ;  
But as the tinkling sound came nigh,  
Old David's heart beat wonderous high.  
He thought of riding on the wind ;  
Of leaving hawk and hern behind ;  
Of sailing lightly o'er the sea,  
In mussel shell, to Germany ;  
Of revel raids by dale and down ;  
Of lighting torches at the moon ;  
Or through the sounding spheres to sing,  
Borne on the fiery meteor's wing ;

Of dancing 'neath the moonlight sky ;  
Of sleeping in the dew-cup's eye.  
And then he thought—O ! dread to tell !—  
Of tithes the fairies paid to hell !

David turned up a reverend eye,  
And fixed it on the morning sky ;  
He knew a mighty one lived there,  
That sometimes heard a warrior's prayer—  
No word, save one, could David say :  
Old David had not learned to pray.

Scarce will a Scotsman yet regard  
What David saw, and what he heard.  
He heard their horses snort and tread,  
And every word the riders said ;  
While green portmanteaus, long and low,  
Lay bended o'er each saddle bow.  
A lovely maiden rode between,  
Whom David judged the fairy Queen ;

But strange ! he heard her moans resound,  
And saw her feet with fetters bound.

Fast spur they on through bush and brake ;  
To Ettrick woods their course they take.  
Old David followed still in view,  
Till near the Lochilaw they drew ;  
There in a deep and wonderous dell,  
Where wandering sun-beam never fell,  
Where noon-tide breezes never blew  
From flowers to drink the morning dew ;  
There, underneath the sylvan shade,  
The fairies' spacious bower was made.  
Its rampart was the tangling sloe,  
The bending briar, and misletoe ;  
And o'er its roof, the crooked oak  
Waved wildly from the frowning rock.

This wonderous bower, this haunted dell,  
The forest shepherd shunned as hell !

When sound of fairies' silver horn  
Came on the evening breezes borne,  
Homeward he fled, nor made a stand,  
Thinking the spirits hard at hand.  
But when he heard the eldrich swell  
Of giggling laugh and bridle bell,  
Or saw the riders troop along,  
His orisons were loud and strong.  
His household fare he yielded free  
To this mysterious company,  
The fairest maid his cot within  
Resigned with awe and little din ;  
True he might weep, but nothing say,  
For none durst say the fairies nay.

Old David hasted home that night,  
A wondering and a wearied wight.  
Seven sons he had, alert and keen,  
Had all in Border battles been ;  
Had wielded brand, and bent the bow,  
For those who sought their overthrow.

Their hearts were true, their arms were strong,  
Their faulchions keen, their arrows long ;  
The race of fairies they denied,—  
No fairies kept the English side.

Our yeomen on their armour threw,  
Their brands of steel and bows of yew ;  
Long arrows at their backs they sling,  
Fledged from the Snowdon eagle's wing,  
And boun' away brisk as the wind,  
The sire before, the sons behind.

That evening fell so sweetly still,  
So mild on lonely moor and hill,  
The little genii of the fell  
Forsook the purple heather bell,  
And all their dripping beds of dew,  
In wind-flower, thyme, and violet blue ;  
Aloft their viewless looms they heave,  
And dew-webs round the helmets weave.



The waning moon her lustre threw  
Pale round her throne of softened blue ;  
Her circuit, round the southland sky,  
Was languid, low, and quickly bye ;  
Leaning on cloud so faint and fair,  
And cradled on the golden air ;  
Modest and pale as maiden bride,  
She sunk upon the trembling tide.

What late in daylight proved a jest,  
Was now the doubt of every breast.  
That fairies *were*, was not disputed ;  
But *what* they were, was greatly doubted.  
Each argument was guarded well,  
With “ if,” and “ should,” and “ who can tell.”

“ Sure He that made majestic man,  
And framed the world's stupendous plan ;  
Who placed on high the steady pole,  
And sowed the stars that round it roll ;

And made that sky, so large and blue,—  
Could surely make a fairy too.”

The sooth to say, each valiant core  
Knew feelings never felt before.  
Oft had they darned the midnight brake,  
Fearless of aught save bog and lake;  
But now the nod of sapling fir,  
The heath-cock's loud exulting whirr,  
The cry of hern from sedgy pool,  
Or airy bleeter's rolling howl,  
Came fraught with more dismaying dread  
Than warder's horn, or warrior's tread.

Just as the gloom of midnight fell,  
They reached the fairies' lonely dell.  
O heavens! that dell was dark as death!  
Perhaps the pit-fall yawned beneath!  
Perhaps that lane that winded low,  
Led to a nether world of woe!

But stern necessity's controul,  
Resistless sways the human soul.

The bows are bent, the tinders smoke  
With fire by sword struck from the rock.  
Old David held the torch before ;  
His right hand heaved a dread claymore,  
Whose Rippon edge he meant to try  
On the first fairy met his eye.  
Above his head his brand was raised ;  
Above his head the taper blazed ;  
A sterner or a ghashtlier sight,  
Ne'er entered bower at dead of night.  
Below each lifted arm was seen  
The barbed point of arrow keen,  
Which waited but the twang of bow  
To fly like lightning on the foe.  
Slow move they on, with steady eye,  
Resolved to conquer or to die.

At length they spied a massive door,  
Deep in a nook, unseen before ;

And by it slept, on wicker chair,  
A sprite of dreadful form and air.  
His grizzly beard flowed round his throat,  
Like shaggy hair of mountain goat ;  
His open jaws and visage grim,  
His half-shut eye so deadly dim,  
Made David's blood to's bosom rush,  
And his gray hair his helmet brush.  
He squared, and made his faulchion wheel  
Around his back from head to heel ;  
Then rising, tiptoe struck amain,  
Down fell the sleeper's head in twain ;  
And springing blood, in veil of smoke,  
Whizzed high against the bending oak.

“ By heaven !” said George, with jocund air,  
“ Father, if all the fairies there  
Are of the same materials made,  
Let them beware the Rippon blade !”  
A ghastly smile was seen to play  
O'er David's visage, stern and gray ;

He hoped, and feared ; but ne'er till then  
Knew whether he fought with sprites or men.

The massy door they next unlock,  
That oped to hall beneath the rock,  
In which new wonders met the eye :  
The room was ample, rude, and high,  
The arches caverned, dark, and torn,  
On Nature's rifted columns borne ;  
Of moulding rude the embrazure,  
And all the wild entablature ;  
And far o'er roof and architrave,  
The ivy's ringlets bend and wave.  
In each abrupt recess was seen  
A couch of heath and rushes green ;  
While every alcove's sombre hue,  
Was gem'd with drops of midnight dew.

Why stand our heroes still as death,  
Nor muscle move, nor heave a breath ?



See how the sire his torch has lowered,  
And bends recumbent o'er his sword !  
The arcubalister has thrown  
His threatening, thirsty arrows down !  
Struck in one moment, all the band  
Entranced like moveless statues stand !  
Enchantment sure arrests the spear,  
And stints the warrior's bold career !

List, list, what mellow angel sound  
Distils from yonder gloom profound !  
'Tis not the note of gathering shell,  
Of fairy horn, nor silver bell !  
No, 'tis the lute's melliflous swell,  
Mixed with a maiden's voice so clear,  
The flitting bats flock round to hear !

So wildly o'er the vault it rung,  
That song, if in the green-wood sung,  
Would draw the fays of wood and plain  
To kiss the lips that poured the strain.

The lofty pine would listening lean ;  
The wild birch wave her tresses green ;  
And larks, that rose the dawn to greet,  
Drop lifeless at the singer's feet.  
The air was old, the measure slow,  
The words were plain, but words of woe.

Soft died the strain ; the warriors stand,  
Nor rested lance, nor lifted brand,  
But listening bend, in hopes again  
To hear that sweetly plaintive strain.  
'Tis gone ! and each uplifts his eye,  
As waked from dream of ecstasy.

Why stoops young Owen's gilded crest ?  
Why heave those groans from Owen's breast ?  
While kinsmen's eyes in raptures speak,  
Why steals the tear o'er Owen's cheek ?  
That melting song, that song of pain,  
Was sung to Owen's favourite strain ;

The words were new, but that sweet lay  
Had Owen heard in happier day.

Fast press they on; in close-set row,  
Winded the lab'rinth far and low,  
Till, in the cave's extremest bound,  
Arrayed in sea-green silk, they found  
Five beauteous dames, all fair and young;  
And she, who late so sweetly sung,  
Sat leaning o'er a silver lute,  
Pale with despair, with terror mute.

When back her auburn locks she threw,  
And raised her eyes so lovely blue,  
'Twas like the woodland rose in dew!  
That look was soft as morning flower,  
And mild as sun-beam through the shower.  
Old David gazed, and weened the while,  
He saw a suffering angel smile;  
Weened he had heard a seraph sing,  
And sounds of a celestial string.

But when Young Owen met her view,  
She shrieked, and to his bosom flew :  
For, oft before, in Moodlaw bowers,  
They two had past the evening hours.  
She was the loveliest mountain maid,  
That e'er by grove or riv'let strayed ;  
Old Raeburn's child, the fairest flower  
That ever bloomed in Eskdale-moor.  
'Twas she the Sire that morn had seen,  
And judged to be the Fairy Queen ;  
'Twas she who framed the artless lay,  
That stopped the warriors on their way.

Close to her lover's breast she clung,  
And round his neck enraptured sung :—  
“ O, my dear Owen ! haste and tell,  
What caused thee dare this lonely dell,  
And seek your maid, at midnight still,  
Deep in the bowels of the hill ?  
Here in this dark and drear abode,  
By all deserted but my God,

Must I have reft the life he gave,  
Or lived in shame a villain's slave.  
I was, at midnight's murkest hour,  
Stole from my father's stately tower,  
And never thought again to view  
The sun or sky's ethereal blue;  
But since the first of Border-men  
Has found me in this dismal den,  
I to his arms for shelter fly,  
With him to live, or with him die."

How glowed brave Owen's manly face,  
While in that lady's kind embrace !  
Warm tears of joy his utterance staid ;  
" O, my loved Ann !" was all he said.  
Though well they loved, her high estate  
Caused Owen ay aloof to wait ;  
And watch her bower, beside the rill,  
When twilight rocked the breezes still,  
And waked the music of the grove  
To hymn the vesper song of love.



There, underneath the green-wood bough,  
Oft had they breathed the tender vow.

With Ann of Raeburn here they found  
The flowers of all the Border round ;  
From whom the strangest tale they hear,  
That e'er astounded warrior's ear.  
'Twould make even Superstition blush,  
And all her tales of spirits hush.

That night the spoilers ranged the vale,  
By Dryhope towers, and Meggat-dale.  
Ah ! little trowed the fraudulent train,  
They ne'er should see their wealth again !  
Their lemans, and their mighty store,  
For which they nightly toils had bore,  
Full twenty Autumn moons and more !  
They little deemed, when morning dawned,  
To meet the deadly Rippon brand ;  
And only find, at their return,  
In their loved cave an early urn.

Ill suits it simple bard to tell  
Of bloody work that there befel.  
He lists not deeds of death to sing,  
Of splintered spear, and twanging string ;  
Of piercing arrow's purpled wing,  
How faulchions flash, and helmets ring.  
Not one of all that prowling band,  
So long the terror of the land,  
Not one escaped their deeds to tell ;  
All in the winding lab'rinth fell.  
The spoil was from the cave conveyed,  
Where in a heap the dead were laid :  
The outer cave our yeomen fill,  
And left them in the hollow hill.

But still that dell, and bourn beneath,  
The forest shepherd dreads as death.  
Not there at evening dares he stray,  
Though love impatient points the way ;  
Though throbs his heart the maid to see,  
That's waiting by the trysting tree.

Even the old Sire, so reverend gray,  
Ere turns the scale of night and day,  
Oft breathes the short and ardent prayer,  
That heaven may guard his footsteps there!  
His eyes, meantime, so dim with dread,  
Scarce ken the turf his foot must tread.  
For still 'tis told, and still believed,  
That there the spirits were deceived,  
And maidens from their grasp retrieved :  
That this they still preserve in mind,  
And watch, when sighs the midnight wind,  
To wreck their rage on humankind.

Old David, for this doughty raid,  
Was keeper of the forest made ;  
A trooper he of gallant fame,  
And first of all the Laidlaw name.

E'er since, in Ettrick's glens so green,  
Spirits, though there, are seldom seen ;

And fears of elf, and fairy raid,  
Have like a morning dream decayed.  
The bare-foot maid, of rosy hue,  
Dares from the heath-flower brush the dew,  
To meet her love in moon-light still,  
By flowery den or tinkling rill ;  
And well dares she till midnight stay,  
Among the coils of fragrant hay.

True, some weak shepherds, gone astray,  
As fell the dusk of Hallow-day,  
Have heard the tinkling sound aloof,  
And gentle tread of horse's hoof ;  
And flying swifter than the wind,  
Left all their scattered flocks behind.

True, when the evening tales are told,  
When winter nights are dark and cold,  
The boy dares not to barn repair  
Alone, to say his evening prayer.

Nor dare the maiden ope the door,  
Unless her lover walk before ;  
Then well can counterfeit the fright,  
If star-beam on the water light ;  
And to his breast in terror cling,  
For such a dread and dangerous thing.

O, Ettrick ! shelter of my youth !  
Thou sweetest glen of all the south !  
Thy fairy tales, and songs of yore,  
Shall never fire my bosom more.  
Thy winding glades, and mountains wild,  
The scenes that pleased me when a child,  
Each verdant vale, and flowery lea,  
Still in my midnight dreams I see ;  
And waking oft, I sigh for thee.  
Thy hapless bard, though forced to roam  
Afar from thee without a home,  
Still there his glowing breast shall turn,  
Till thy green bosom fold his urn.



Then, underneath thy mountain stone,  
Shall sleep unnoticed and unknown.

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When ceased the shepherd's simple lay,  
With careless mien he lounged away.  
No bow he deigned, nor anxious looked  
How the gay throng their minstrel brooked.  
No doubt within his bosom grew,  
That to his skill the prize was due.  
Well might he hope, for while he sung,  
Louder and louder plaudits rung ;  
And when he ceased his numbers wild,  
Fair Royalty approved and smiled.  
Long had the bard, with hopes elate,  
Sung to the low, the gay, the great ;  
And once had dared, at flatterer's call,  
To tune his harp in Branxholm hall ;  
But, nor his notes of soothing sound,  
Nor zealous word of bard renowned,  
Might those persuade, that worth could be  
Inherent in such mean degree.

But when the smile of Sovereign fair  
Attested genuine nature there,  
Throbb'd high with rapture every breast,  
And all his merit stood confest.

Different the next the herald named ;  
Warrior he was, in battle maimed,  
When Lennox, on the downs of Kyle,  
O'erthrew Maconnel and Argyle.  
Unable more the sword to wield  
With dark Clan-Alpine in the field,  
Or rouse the dun-deer from her den  
With fierce Macfarlane and his men ;  
He strove to earn a minstrel name,  
And fondly nurs'd the sacred flame.  
Warm was his heart, and bold his strain,  
Wild fancies in his moody brain ;  
Gamboled, unbridled, and unbound,  
Lured by a shade, decoyed by sound.

In tender age, when mind was free,  
As standing by his nurse's knee,  
He heard a tale, so passing strange,  
Of injured spirit's cool revenge ;  
It chilled his heart with blasting dread,  
Which never more that bosom fled.  
When passion's flush had fled his eye,  
And gray hairs told that youth was bye ;  
Still quaked his heart at bush or stone,  
As wandering in the gloom alone.

Where foxes roam, and eagles rave,  
And dark woods round Ben-Lomond wave,  
Once on a night, a night of dread !  
He held convention with the dead ;  
Brought warnings to the house of death,  
And tidings from a world beneath.

Loud blew the blast—the evening came,  
The way was long, the minstrel lame ;

The mountain's side was dorn with oak,  
Darkened with pine, and ribbed with rock :  
Blue billows round its base were driven,  
Its top was steeped in waves of heaven.  
The wood, the wind, the billow's moan,  
All spoke in language of their own ;  
But too well to our minstrel known.  
Wearied, bewildered, in amaze,  
Hymning in heart the Virgin's praise,  
A cross he framed, of birchen bough,  
And 'neath that cross he laid him low ;  
Hid by the heath, and Highland plaid,  
His old harp in his bosom laid.  
O ! when the winds that wandered by,  
Sung on her breast their lullaby,  
How thrilled the tones his bosom through,  
And deeper, holier, poured his vow !  
No sleep was his—he raised his eye,  
To note if dangerous place was nigh.

There columned rocks, abrupt and rude,  
Hung o'er his gateless solitude :  
The muffled sloe, and tangling brier,  
Precluded freak or entrance here ;  
But yonder oped a little path,  
O'ershadowed, deep, and dark as death.  
Trembling, he groped around his lair  
For mountain ash, but none was there.  
Teeming with forms, his terror grew ;  
Heedful he watched, for well he knew,  
That in that dark and devious dell,  
Some lingering ghost or sprite must dwell :  
So as he trowed, so it befel.

The stars were wrapt in curtain gray,  
The blast of midnight died away ;  
'Twas just the hour of solemn dread,  
When walk the spirits of the dead.  
Rustled the leaves with gentle motion,  
Groaned his chilled soul in deep devotion.



The lake-fowl's wake was heard no more ;  
The wave forgot to brush the shore ;  
Hushed was the bleat, on moor and hill ;  
The wandering clouds of heaven stood still.

What heart could bear, what eye could meet,  
The spirits in their lone retreat !  
Rustled again the darksome dell ;  
Straight on the minstrel's vision fell,  
A trembling and unwonted light,  
That showed the phantoms to his sight.

Came first a slender female form,  
Pale as the moon in Winter storm ;  
A babe of sweet simplicity  
Clung to her breast as pale as she,  
And ay she sung its lullaby.  
That cradle-song of the phantom's child,  
O ! but it was soothing, holy, and wild !  
But, O ! that song can ill be sung,  
By Lowland bard, or Lowland tongue.

### The Spectre's Cradle-Song.

Hush, my bonny babe ! hush, and be still !  
Thy mother's arms shall shield thee from ill.  
Far have I borne thee, in sorrow and pain,  
To drink the breeze of the world again.  
The dew shall moisten thy brow so meek,  
And the breeze of midnight fan thy cheek,  
And soon shall we rest in the bow of the hill ;  
Hush, my bonny babe ! hush, and be still !  
For thee have I travailed, in weakness and woe,  
The world above and the world below.  
My heart was soft, and it fell in the snare ;  
Thy father was cruel, but thou wert fair.  
I sinned, I sorrowed, I died for thee ;  
Smile, my bonny babe ! smile on me !

See yon thick clouds of murky hue ;  
Yon star that peeps from its window blue ;  
Above yon clouds, that wander far,  
Away, above yon little star,

There's a home of peace that shall soon be thine,  
And there shalt thou see thy Father and mine.  
The flowers of the world shall bud and decay,  
The trees of the forest be weeded away ;  
But there shalt *thou* bloom for ever and ay.  
The time will come, I shall follow thee ;  
But long, long hence, that time shall be !  
Smile now, my bonny babe ! smile on me !

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Slow moved she on with dignity,  
Nor bush, nor brake, nor rock, nor tree,  
Her footsteps staid—o'er cliff so bold,  
Where not the wren its foot could hold,  
Stately she wandered, firm and free,  
Singing her softened lullaby.

Three naked phantoms next came on ;  
They beckoned low, past, and were gone.  
Then came a troop of sheeted dead,  
With shade of chieftain at their head :

And with our bard, in brake forlorn,  
Held converse till the break of morn.  
Their ghostly rites, their looks, their mould,  
Or words to man, he never told ;  
But much he learned of mystery,  
Of that was past, and that should be.  
Thenceforth he troubles oft divined,  
And scarcely held his perfect mind ;  
Yet still the song, admired when young,  
He loved, and that in Court he sung.

### Macgregor.

#### THE ELEVENTH BARD'S SONG.

“ Macgregor, Macgregor, remember our foemen ;  
The moon rises broad from the brow of Ben-Lomond ;  
The clans are impatient, and chide thy delay ;  
Arise ! let us bound to Glen-Lyon away.”—

Stern scowled the Macgregor, then silent and sullen,  
He turned his red eye to the braes of Strathfillan ;



“ Go, Malcolm, to sleep, let the clans be dismissed;  
The Campbells this night for Macgregor must rest.”—

“ Macgregor, Macgregor, our scouts have been flying,  
Three days, round the hills of M’Nab and Glen-Lyon;  
Of riding and running such tidings they bear,  
We must meet them at home else they’ll quickly be here.”—

“ The Campbell may come, as his promises bind him,  
And haughty M’Nab, with his giants behind him;  
This night I am bound to relinquish the fray,  
And do what it freezes my vitals to say.  
Forgive me, dear brother, this horror of mind;  
Thou knowest in the strife I was never behind,  
Nor ever receded a foot from the van,  
Or blenched at the ire or the prowess of man.  
But I’ve sworn by the cross, by my God, and my all!  
An oath which I cannot, and dare not recal;  
Ere the shadows of midnight fall east from the pile,  
To meet with a spirit this night in Glen-Gyle.



Last night, in my chamber, all thoughtful and lone,  
I called to remembrance some deeds I had done,  
When entered a lady, with visage so wan,  
And looks, such as never were fastened on man.  
I knew her, O brother ! I knew her too well !  
Of that once fair dame such a tale I could tell,  
As would thrill thy bold heart ; but how long she remained,  
So racked was my spirit, my bosom so pained,  
I knew not—but ages seemed short to the while.  
Though proffer the Highlands, nay, all the green isle,  
With length of existence no man can enjoy,  
The same to endure, the dread proffer I'd fly !  
The thrice threatened pangs of last night to forego,  
Macgregor would dive to the mansions below.  
Despairing and mad, to futurity blind,  
The present to shun, and some respite to find,  
I swore, ere the shadow fell east from the pile,  
To meet her alone by the brook of Glen-Gyle.

She told me, and turned my chilled heart to a stone,  
The glory and name of Macgregor was gone :

That the pine, which for ages had shed a bright halo,  
Afar on the mountains of Highland Glen-Falo,  
Should wither and fall ere the turn of yon moon,  
Smit through by the canker of hated Colquhoun :  
That a feast on Macgregors each day should be common,  
For years, to the eagles of Lennox and Lomond.

A parting embrace, in one moment, she gave :  
Her breath was a furnace ; her bosom the grave !  
Then flitting elusive, she said, with a frown,  
‘ The mighty Macgregor shall yet be my own !’—

“ Macgregor, thy fancies are wild as the wind ;  
The dreams of the night have disordered thy mind.  
Come, buckle thy panoply—march to the field,—  
See, brother, how hacked are thy helmet and shield !  
Aye, that was M’Nab, in the height of his pride,  
When the lions of Dochart stood firm by his side.  
This night the proud chief his presumption shall rue ;  
Rise, brother, these chinks in his heart-blood will glue :

Thy fantasies frightful shall flit on the wing,  
When loud with thy bugle Glen-Lyon shall ring.”—

Like glimpse of the moon through the storm of the night,  
Macgregor's red eye shed one sparkle of light :  
It faded—it darkened—he shuddered—he sighed,—  
“ No ! not for the universe ! ” low he replied.

Away went Macgregor, but went not alone ;  
To watch the dread rendezvous, Malcolm has gone.  
They oared the broad Lomond, so still and serene,  
And deep in her bosom, how awful the scene !  
O'er mountains inverted the blue waters curled,  
And rocked them on skies of a far nether world.

All silent they went, for the time was approaching ;  
The moon the blue zenith already was touching ;  
No foot was abroad on the forest or hill,  
No sound but the lullaby sung by the rill :  
Young Malcolm at distance, couched, trembling the while,—  
Macgregor stood lone by the brook of Glen-Gyle.

Few minutes had passed, ere they spied on the stream,  
A skiff sailing light, where a lady did seem ;  
Her sail was the web of the gossamer's loom,  
The glow-worm her wakelight, the rainbow her boom ;  
A dim rayless beam was her prow and her mast,  
Like wold-fire, at midnight, that glares on the waste.  
Though rough was the river with rock and cascade,  
No torrent, no rock, her velocity staid ;  
She wimpled the water to weather and lee,  
And heaved as if borne on the waves of the sea.  
Mute Nature was roused in the bounds of the glen ;  
The wild deer of Gairtney abandoned his den,  
Fled panting away, over river and isle,  
Nor once turned his eye to the brook of Glen-Gyle.

The fox fled in terror ; the eagle awoke,  
As slumbering he dozed in the shelve of the rock ;  
Astonished, to hide in the moon-beam he flew,  
And screwed the night-heaven till lost in the blue.

Young Malcolm beheld the pale lady approach,  
The chieftain salute her, and shrink from her touch.



He saw the Macgregor kneel down on the plain,  
As begging for something he could not obtain ;  
She raised him indignant, derided his stay,  
Then bore him on board, set her sail, and away.

Though fast the red bark down the river did glide,  
Yet faster ran Malcolm adown by its side ;  
“ Macgregor ! Macgregor ! ” he bitterly cried ;  
“ Macgregor ! Macgregor ! ” the echoes replied.  
He struck at the lady, but, strange though it seem,  
His sword only fell on the rocks and the stream ;  
But the groans from the boat, that ascended amain,  
Were groans from a bosom in horror and pain.—  
They reached the dark lake, and bore lightly away ;  
Macgregor is vanished for ever and ay !

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Abrupt as glance of morning sun,  
The bard of Lomond's lay is done.  
Loves not the swain, from path of dew,  
At morn the golden orb to view,  
Rise broad and yellow from the main,  
While scarce a shadow lines the plain.



Well knows he then the gathering cloud  
Shall all his noontide glories shroud.  
Like smile of morn before the rain,  
Appeared the minstrel's mounting strain.  
As easy inexperienced hind,  
Who sees not coming rains and wind,  
The beacon of the dawning hour,  
Nor notes the blink before the shower,  
Astonished, mid his open grain,  
Sees round him pour the sudden rain,—  
So looked the still attentive throng,  
When closed at once Macfarlane's song.

Time was it,—when he 'gan to tell  
Of spectre stern, and barge of hell;  
Loud, and more loud, the minstrel sung;  
Loud, and more loud, the chords he rung;  
Wild grew his looks, for well he knew  
The scene was dread, the tale was true!  
And ere Loch Ketturine's wave was won,  
Faultered his voice, his breath was done.

He raised his brown hand to his brow,  
To veil his eye's enraptured glow ;  
Flung back his locks of silver gray,  
Lifted his crutch, and limped away.

The Bard of Clyde stepped next in view ;  
Fair was his form, his harp was new ;  
His eyes were bright, his manner gay,  
But plain his garb, and plain his lay.

### Earl Walter,

#### THE ELEVENTH BARD'S SONG.

“ What makes Earl Walter pace the wood  
In the wan light of the moon ?  
Why altered is Earl Walter's mood  
So strangely, and so soon ? ” —

“ Ah ! he is fallen to fight a knight  
Whom man could never tame,  
To morrow, in his Sovereign's sight,  
Or bear perpetual shame. ” —

“ Go warn the Clyde, go warn the Ayr,  
Go warn them suddenly,  
If none will fight for Earl Walter,  
Some one may fight for me.”—

“ Now hold your tongue, my daughter dear,  
Now hold your tongue for shame,  
For never shall my son Walter  
Disgrace his father's name.

Shall ladies tell, and minstrels sing,  
How lord of Scottish blood  
By proxy fought before his king?  
No, never ! by the rood !”—

Earl Walter rose ere it was day,  
For battle made him boun' ;  
Earl Walter mounted his bonny gray,  
And rode to Stirling town.

Old Hamilton from the tower came down,

“Go saddle a steed for me,

And I'll away to Stirling town,

This deadly bout to see.

Mine eye is dim, my locks are gray,

My cheek is furred and wan;

Ah, me! but I have seen the day

I feared no single man!

Bring me my stead,” said Hamilton;

“Darcie his vaunts may rue;

Whoever slays my only son

Must fight the father too.

Whoever fights my noble son

May foin the best he can;

Whoever braves Wat Hamilton,

Shall know he braves a man.”—

And there was riding in belt and brand,  
And running o'er holt and lea ;  
For all the lords of fair Scotland  
Came there the fight to see.

And squire, and groom, and baron bold,  
Trooping in thousands came,  
And many a hind, and warrior old,  
And many a lovely dame.

When good Earl Walter rode the ring  
Upon his mettled gray,  
There was none so ready as our good king  
To bid that Earl good day.

For one so gallant and so young,  
Oh, many a heart beat high ;  
And no fair eye in all the throng,  
Nor rosy cheek was dry.



But up then spoke the king's daughter,  
Fair Margaret was her name,—  
“ If we should lose brave Earl Walter,  
My sire is sore to blame.

Forbid the fight, my liege, I pray,  
Upon my bended knee.”—  
“ Daughter, I'm loth to say you nay;  
It cannot, must not be.”—

“ Proclaim it round,” the princess cried,  
“ Proclaim it suddenly;  
If none will fight for Earl Walter,  
Some one may fight for me.

In Douglas-dale I have a tower,  
With many a holm and hill,  
I'll give them all, and ten times more,  
To him will Darcie kill.”—

But up then spoke old Hamilton,  
And doffed his bonnet blue;  
In his sunk eye the tear-drop shone,  
And his gray locks o'er it flew :—

“ Cease, cease thou lovely royal maid,  
Small cause hast thou for pain;  
Wat Hamilton shall have no aid  
'Gainst lord of France or Spain.

I love my boy, but should he fly,  
Or other for him fight,  
Heaven grant that first his parent's eye  
May set in starless night !”—

Young Margaret blushed, her weeping staid,  
And quietly looked on :  
Now Margaret was the fairest maid  
On whom the day light shone.

Her eye was like the star of love,  
That blinks across the evening dim ;  
The locks that waved that eye above,  
Like light clouds curling round the sun.

When Darcie entered in the ring,  
A shudder round the circle flew :  
Like men who from a serpent spring,  
They startled at the view.

His look so fierce, his crest so high,  
His belts and bands of gold,  
And the glances of his charger's eye,  
Were dreadful to behold.

But when he saw Earl Walter's face,  
So rosy and so young,  
He frowned, and sneered with haughty grace,  
And round disdainful flung.

“What ! dost thou turn my skill to sport,  
And break thy jests on me ?  
Thinkst thou I sought the Scottish court,  
To play with boys like thee ?

Fond youth, go home and learn to ride ;  
For pity get thee gone ;  
Tilt with the girls and boys of Clyde,  
And boast of what thou’st done.

If Darcie’s spear but touch thy breast,  
It flies thy body through ;  
If Darcie’s sword come o’er thy crest,  
It cleaves thy heart in two.”—

“I came not here to vaunt, Darcie ;  
I came not here to scold ;  
It ill befits a knight like thee  
Such proud discourse to hold.

To-morrow boast, amid the rout,  
Of deeds which thou hast done ;  
To-day beware thy saucy snout ;  
Rude blusterer, come on !"—

Rip went the spurs in either steed,  
To different posts sprung ;  
Quivered each spear o'er charger's head ;  
Forward each warrior hung.

The horn blew once—the horn blew twice—  
Oh ! many a heart beat high !  
'Twas silence all !—the horn blew thrice—  
Dazzled was every eye.

Hast thou not seen, from heaven, in ire  
The eagle swift descend ?  
Hast thou not seen the sheeted fire  
The lowering darkness rend ?



Not faster glides the eagle gray  
Adown the yielding wind ;  
Not faster bears the bolt away,  
Leaving the storm behind ;

Than flew the warriors on their way,  
With full suspended breath ;  
Than flew the warriors on their way  
Across the field of death.

So fierce the shock, so loud the clang,  
The gleams of fire were seen ;  
The rocks and towers of Stirling rang,  
And the red blood fell between.

Earl Walter's grey was borne aside,  
Lord Darcie's black held on.

" Oh ! ever alack," fair Margaret cried,

" The brave Earl Walter's gone !"

" Oh ! ever alack," the king replied,

" That ever the deed was done !"

Earl Walter's broken corslet doffed,  
He turned with lightened eye ;  
His glancing spear he raised aloft,  
And seemed to threat the sky.

Lord Darcie's spear, aimed at his breast,  
He parried dext'rously ;  
Then caught him rudely by the wrist,  
Saying, " warrior come with me !"

Lord Darcie drew, Lord Darcie threw ;  
But threw and drew in vain ;  
Lord Darcie drew, Lord Darcie threw,  
And spurred his black amain.

Down came Lord Darcie, casque and brand  
Loud rattled on the clay ;  
Down came Earl Walter, hand in hand,  
And head to head they lay.

Lord Darcie's steed turned to his lord,

And, trembling, stood behind ;

But off Earl Walter's dapple scoured

Far fleeter than the wind ;

Nor stop, nor stay, nor gate, nor ford,

Could make her look behind.

O'er holt, o'er hill, o'er slope and slack,

She sought her native stall ;

She liked not Darcie's doughty black,

Nor Darcie's spear at all.

" Even go thy ways," Earl Walter cried,

" Since better may not be ;

I'll trust my life with weapon tried,

But never again with thee.

Rise up, Lord Darcie, sey thy brand,

And fling thy mail away ;

For foot to foot, and hand to hand,

We'll now decide the day."

So said, so done ; their helms they flung,  
Their doublets linked and sheen ;  
And hawberk, armlet, cuirass, rung  
Promiscuous on the green.

“ Now, Darcie ! now, thy dreaded name,  
That oft. hast chilled a foe,  
Thy hard-earned honours, and thy fame,  
Depend on every blow.

Sharp be thine eye, and firm thy hand ;  
Thy heart unmoved remain ;  
For never was the Scottish brand  
Upreared, and reared in vain.”—

“ Now do thy best, young Hamilton,  
Rewarded shalt thou be ;  
Thy king, thy country, and thy kin,  
All, all depend on thee !

Thy father's heart yearns for his son,  
The ladies' cheeks grow wan ;  
Wat Hamilton ! Wat Hamilton,  
Now prove thyself a man !"—

"What makes Lord Darcie shift and dance  
So fast around the plain ?  
What makes Lord Darcie strike and lance,  
As passion fired his brain ?

Lay on, lay on," said Hamilton ;  
"Thou bearest thee boist'rously ;  
If thou shouldst pelt till day be done,  
Thy weapon I defy.

What makes Lord Darcie shift and wear  
So fast around the plain ?  
Why is Lord Darcie's hollands fair  
All stripped with crimson grain ?"—



The first blow that Earl Walter made  
He clove his bearded chin.

"Beshrew thy heart," Lord Darcie said,  
"Ye sharply do begin!"

The next blow that Earl Walter made,  
Quite through the gare it ran.

"Now by my faith," Lord Darcie said,  
"That's stricken like a man."

The third blow that Earl Walter made,  
It scooped his lordly side.

"Now, by my troth," Lord Darcie said,  
"Thy marks are ill to bide."

Lord Darcie's sword he forced a-hight,  
And tripped him on the plain.

"O, ever alack," then cried the knight,  
"I ne'er shall rise again!"

When good Earl Walter saw he grew  
So pale, and lay so low,  
Away his brace of swords he threw,  
And raised his fainting foe.

Then rang the list with shouts of joy,  
Loud and more loud they grew,  
And many a bonnet to the sky  
And many a coif they threw.

The tear stood in the father's eye,—  
He wiped his aged brow,—  
“ Give me thy hand, my gallant boy,  
I knew thee not till now.

My liege, my king, this is my son  
Whom I present to thee;  
Nor would I change Wat Hamilton  
For any lad I see !”—

“ Welcome, my friend and warrior old ;  
This gallant son of thine  
Is much too good for baron bold,  
He must be son of mine !

For he shall wed my daughter dear,  
The flower of fair Scotland ;  
The badge of honour he shall wear,  
And sit at my right hand.

And he shall have the lands of Kyle,  
And royal bounds of Clyde ;  
And he shall have all Arran's isle  
To dower his royal bride.”

The princess smiled, the princess flushed,  
O, but her heart was fain ;  
And ay her cheek of beauty blushed  
Like rose-bud in the rain.

From this the Hamiltons of Clyde  
Their royal lineage draw ;  
And thus was won the fairest bride  
That Scotland ever saw !

---

When ceased the lay, the plaudits rung,  
Not for the bard, or song he sung ;  
But every eye with pleasure shone,  
And cast its smiles on one alone,—  
That one was princely Hamilton !  
And well the gallant chief approved  
The bard who sung of sire beloved,  
And pleased were all the court to see  
The minstrel hailed so courteously.

Again is every courtier's gaze  
Speaking suspense, and deep amaze ;  
The bard was stately, dark, and stern,—  
'Twas Drummond, from the moors of Ern.

Tall was his frame, his fore-head high,  
Still and mysterious was his eye ;  
His look was like a winter day,  
When storms and winds have sunk away.

Well versed was he in holy lore ;  
In cloistered dome the cowl he wore ;  
But wearied with the eternal strain  
Of formal breviats, cold and vain,  
He wooed, in depth of Highland dale,  
The silver spring, and mountain gale.

In gray Glen-Ample's forest deep,  
Hid from the rains and tempest's sweep,  
In bosom of an aged wood  
His solitary cottage stood.  
Its walls were bastioned, dark, and dorn,  
Dark was its roof of filmot fern,  
And dark the vista down the linn,  
But all was love and peace within.



Religion, man's first friend and best,  
Was in that home a constant guest :  
There, sweetly, every morn and even,  
Warm orisons were poured to heaven :  
And every cliff Glen-Ample knew,  
And green wood on her banks that grew,  
In answer to his bounding string,  
Had learned the hymns of heaven to sing ;  
With many a song of mystic lore,  
Rude as when sung in days of yore.

His were the snowy flocks, that strayed  
Adown Glen-Airtney's forest glade ;  
And his the goat, and chesnut hind,  
Where proud Ben-Vorlich cleaves the wind :  
There oft, when suns of summer shone,  
The bard would sit, and muse alone,  
Of innocence, expelled by man ;  
Of nature's fair and wonderous plan ;  
Of the eternal throne sublime ;  
Of visions seen in antient time,

Till his rapt soul would leave her home  
In visionary worlds to roam.  
Then would the mists that wandered bye  
Seem hovering spirits to his eye :  
Then would the breeze's whistling sweep,  
Soft lulling in the cavern deep,  
Seem to the enthusiast's dreaming ear  
The words of spirits whispering near.

Loathed his firm soul, the measured chime  
And florid films of modern rhyme ;  
No other lays became his tongue  
But those his rude fore-fathers sung.  
And when by wandering minstrel warned,  
The mandate of his Queen he learned,  
So much he prized the ancient strain,  
High hopes had he the prize to gain.  
With modest, yet majestic mien,  
He tuned his harp of solemn strain :  
O list the tale, ye fair and young,  
A lay so strange was never sung !

**Kilmeny.**

## THE THIRTEENTH BARD'S SONG.

Bonnye Kilmeny gede up the glen ;  
But it walsna to meite Duneira's men,  
Nor the rozy munke of the isle to see,  
For Kilmeny was pure as pure culde be.  
It was only to heire the yorline syng,  
And pu the blew kress-flourir rundie the spryng ;  
To pu the hyp and the hyndberrye,  
And the nytt that hang fra the hesil tree ;  
For Kilmeny was pure as pure culde be.  
But lang may her minny luke our the wa,  
And lang may scho seike in the greinwood schaw ;  
Lang the lairde of Duneira bleme,  
And lang, lang greite or Kilmeny come heme.

Quhan mony lang day had comit and fledde,  
Quhan grief grew caulm, and hope was deade,

Quhan mes for Kilmeny's soul had beine sung,  
Quhan the bedis-man had prayit, and the deide-  
bell rung ;

Lete, lete in ane glomyn, quhan all was still,  
Quhan the freenge was reid on the wastlin hill,  
The wud was sere, the moon i'the wene,  
The reike of the cot hang ouir the playne,  
Like ane littil wee cludde in the worild its lene ;  
Quhan the ingil lowit with ane eiry leme,  
Lete, lete in the glomyn, Kilmeny came heme !

“ Kilmeny, Kilmeny, quhair haif ye beine ?  
Lang haif we socht beth holt and deine ;  
By lynn, by furde, and greinwudde tree,  
Yet ye ir helsome and fayir to see.  
Quhair gat ye that joup of the lille scheine ?  
That bonny snoode of the byrk se greine ?  
And these rosis, the fayrist that ever war seine ?  
Kilmeny, Kilmeny, quhair haif ye beine ? ” —

Kilmeny luckit up with ane lovelye grace,  
But ne smyle was seine on Kilmeny's face ;  
Als still was her luke, and als still was her ee,  
Als the stilnesse that lay on the emerant lee,  
Or the myst that sleips on ane waveless sea.  
For Kilmeny had beine scho kend nocht quhair,  
And Kilmeny had seine quhat scho culde not de-  
clayre ;

Kilmeny had beine quhair the cocke nevir crew,  
Quhair the rayne nevir fell, and the wynd nevir  
blue.

But it seemit as the herpe of the skye had rung,  
And the ayries of heauin playit runde her tung,  
Quhanscho spak of the luvlye formisscho had seine,  
And ane land quhair synn had nevir beine ;  
Ane land of love, and ane land of lychte,  
Withoutten sonne, or mone, or nychte :  
Where the ryver swait ane lyving streime,  
And the lychte ane pure and cludlesse beime :  
The land of veizion it wald seime,  
And still ane everlestyng dreime.



In yond grein wudde there is a waike,  
And in that waike there is a wene,  
And in that wene there is a maïke,  
That nouthar hes flesh, blude, nor bene ;  
And dune in yond greinwudde he walkis his lene.

In that greine wene Kilmeny lay,  
Her bosom happit with flouris gay ;  
But the ayre was soft, and the silens deipe,  
And bonny Kilmeny fell sunde asleipe.  
Scho kend ne mair, nor openit her ee,  
Till wekit by the hymis of ane farr cuntrye.

Scho wekit on ane cuche of the sylk se slim,  
All stryppit with the barris of the raynbowis rim ;  
And luvlye beingis runde war ryfe,  
Quha erst had travellit mortyl lyfe ;  
And ay they smilet, and gan to speire,  
“ What spyrit hes brochte this mortyl heire ?”

“ Lang haif I raikit the worild wide,”  
Ane meike and reverent fere replyit ;

“ Beth nycht and day I haif watchit the fayre,  
Eident a thousande eiris and mayre.  
Yes, I haif watchit our ilk degree,  
Quhairevir blumis femenitye;  
And sinless virgin, free of stain  
In mind and body, faund I nane.  
Nevir, sen the banquhet of tyme,  
Fand I vyrgin in her pryme,  
Qubill anis this bonny maydin I saw  
As spotless as the mornying snaw :  
Full twentye eiris scho has levit as fre  
As the spirits that sojurn this countrye.  
I haif brochte her away fra the snairis of men,  
That synn or dethe scho nevir may ken.”

They claspit her weste and handis fair,  
They kissit her cheik, and they kembit her hayir,  
And runde cam ilka blumyng fere,  
Sayn, “ Bonny Kilmeny, yer welcome here !  
Wemyng are freit of the littand scorne :  
O, blest be the day Kilmeny was born !

Now shall the land of the spiritis see,  
Now shall it ken quhat ane womyn may be !  
Mony long eir, in sorrow and pain,  
Mony long eir thro' the worlde we haif gane,  
Comyshonit to watch fayir womynkinde,  
For its they quha nurice the imortyl minde.  
We haif watchit their stepis as the dawning shone,  
And deipe in the greinwud walkis alone,  
By lille bouir, and silken bedde,  
The vewless teiris haif ouir them shedde ;  
Haif suthit their ardent myndis to sleep,  
Or left the cuche of luife to weip.  
We haif sein ! we haif sein ! but the tyme mene  
    come,  
And the angelis will blush at the day of doom !

O, wald the fayrest of mortyl kynde  
Ay keipe thilke holye troths in mynde,  
That kyndred spyritis ilk motion see,  
Quha watch their wayis with ankshes ee,  
And grieve for the guilt of humanitye !

Och, sweit to hevin the maydenis prayer,  
And the siche that hevis ane bosom se fayir !  
And deire to hevin the wordis of truthe,  
And the prayze of vertu fra beautyis muthe !  
And deire to the viewles formis of ayir,  
The mynde that kythis as the body fayir !

O, bonnye Kilmeny ! fre fra stayne,  
Gin evir ye seike the worild agayne,  
That worild of synn, of sorrow, and feire,  
O, tell of the joyis that are wayting heire !  
And tell of the sygnis ye shall shortlye see ;  
Of the tymes that are now, and the tymes that  
shall be."

They liftit Kilmeny, they ledde her away,  
And scho walkit in the lychte of ane sonles day :  
The skye was ane dome of kristel brichte,  
The fountyn of veezion, and fountyn of lichte :  
The emerant feildes war of dazzling glow,  
And the flouris of everlestyng blow.

Than deipe in the streime her body they layde,  
That her yudith and beautye mocht nevir fede;  
And they smylit on hevin, quhan they saw her lye  
In the streime of lyfe that wanderit bye.  
And scho herde ane songe, scho herde it sung,  
Scho kend nochte quhair; but se sweitlye it rung,  
It fell on her eare lyke ane dreime of the morne:  
“ O ! blist be the daye Kilmeny was born !  
Now shall the land of the spyritis see,  
Now shall it ken quhat ane womyn may be !  
The sun that shynis on the worild se brychte,  
Ane borrowit gleide fra the fountaine of lychte ;  
And the moone that sleikis the skye se dun,  
Lyke ane gouden bow, or ane beimles sun,  
Shall skulk awaye, and be seine ne mayir,  
And the angelis shall miss them travelling the ayr.  
Bnt lang, lang aftir bethe nychte and day,  
Quhan the sun and the worild haif elyit awaye ;  
Quhan the synnir hes gene to his wesum doome,  
Kilmeny shall smyle in eternal bloome !”



They soofit her awaye to ane mountyn greine,  
To see quhat mortyl nevir had seine ;  
And they seted her hiche on ane purpil swerde,  
And bade her heide quhat scho saw and herde ;  
And note the chaingis the spyritis wrochte,  
For now scho leevit in the land of thochte.  
Scho lukit, and scho saw ne sone nor skyis,  
But ane kristel dome of a thusend dyis.  
Scho luckit, and scho saw ne land arychte,  
But ane endles whirle of glory and lychte.  
And radiant beingis went and came  
Far swifter than wynde, or the lynkit flame.  
Scho haide her ene fra the daiziling view ;  
Scho lukit agayn, and the schene was new.

Scho saw ane sun on a simmer skye,  
And cludis of amber sailing bye ;  
Ane lovllye land anethe her laye.  
And that land had lekis and mountaynis graye ;  
And that land had vallies and horye pylis,  
And merlit seas, and a thusande ylis.

Scho saw the korne waif on the vaile ;  
Scho saw the deire rin down the daile ;  
And mony a mortyl toying sore,  
And scho thochte scho had seine the land before.

Scho saw ane ledy sit on a throne,  
The fayrest that evir the sun shone on !  
Ane lyon lickit her hand of mylke,  
And scho held him in ane leish of sylk ;  
And ane leifu mayden stude at her knee,  
With ane sylver wand, and meltyng ee.  
But ther cam ane leman out of the west,  
To woo the ledy that he luvit best ;  
And he sent ane boy her herte to prove,  
And scho took him in, and scho callit him love ;  
But quhan to her breist he gan to cling,  
Scho dreit the payne of the serpentis sting.

Than ane gruff untowyrd gysart came,  
And he hundit the lyon on his dame ;  
And the leifu mayde with the meltyng eye,  
Scho droppit ane tear, and passit bye ;

And scho saw quhill the queen fra the lyon fled,  
Quhill the bonniest flouir in the worild lay deide.  
Ane koffin was set on a distant playne,  
And scho saw the reide blude fall like rayne :  
Then bonny Kilmeny's herte grew saire,  
And scho turnit away, and dochte luke ne maire.

Then the gruff grim keryl girnit amain,  
And they trampit him downe, but he rase againe ;  
And he baitit the lyon to diedis of weir,  
Quhill he lepit the blude to the kyngdome deire.  
But the lyon grew straung, and dainger-prief,  
Quhan crownit with the rose and the claiver leife ;  
Then he lauchit at the keryl, and chesit him away  
To feide with the deire on the mountayn gray :  
He goulit at the keryl, and he geckit at hevin,  
But his merk was set, and his erilis given.  
Kilmeny a while her ene withdrewe ;  
Scho lukit agene, and the schene was new.

Scho saw arunde her, fayir wanfurlit,  
Ane haf of all the glowing worlde,  
Quhair oceanis rowit, and ryveris ran,  
To bunde the aymis of sinful man.  
Scho saw ane pepil, ferse and fell,  
Burst fra their bundis like feindis of hell ;  
The lille grew, and the egil flew,  
And scho herkit on her revining crew.  
The wedos wailit, and the reid blude ran,  
And scho thretinit ane end to the race of man :  
Scho nevir lenit, nor stode in awe,  
Quhill claught by the lyonis deadly paw.  
Och ! then the egil swinkit for lyfe,  
And brainzelit up ane mortyl stryfe ;  
But flew scho north, or flew scho suthe,  
Scho met with the goul of the lyonis muthe.

With ane mootit wing, and wefu mene,  
The egil sochte her eiry agene ;  
But lang may scho cour in her bloodye este,  
And lang, lang sleik her oundit breste,



Afore scho sey ane other flychte,  
To play with the norlan lyonis mychte.

To sing of the sychtis Kilmeny saw,  
Se far surpassing naturis law,  
The syngeris voyse wald synk away,  
And the stryng of his herpe wald cese to play.  
But scho saw quhill the sorrouis of man war bye,  
And all was lufe and hermonye;  
Quhill the sternis of hevin fell lownly away,  
Lyke the flekis of snaw on a winter day.

Then Kilmeny beggit agene to see  
The freindis scho had left in her ayn countrie,  
To tell of the plesse quhair scho had been,  
And the wonderis that lay in the land unseen;  
To warn the living maydenis fayir,  
The luvit of hevin, the spiritis care,  
That all quhase myndis unmelit remaine  
Shall blume in beauty quhan tyme is gene.



With distant museke, soft and deipe,  
They lullit Kilmeny sunde asleepe ;  
And quhan scho wekinit, scho lay her lene,  
All happit with flouris, in the greinwud wene.  
Quhan sevin lang yeiris had cumit and fledde ;  
Quhan greif was calm, and hope was dede ;  
Quhan scairse was rememberit Kilmeny's neme,  
Lete, lete in a gloamyn Kilmeny cam heme !

And O, her beauty was fayir to see,  
But still and steedfast was her ee !  
Her seymar was the lille flour,ir,  
And her cheik the moss-rose in the shouir ;  
And her voyse lyke the distant melodye,  
That floatis along the silver sea.  
But scho luvit to raikie the lenely glen,  
And keepit away fra the hauntis of men ;  
Her holy hymis unherde to syng,  
To suke the flouris, and drynk the spryng.  
But quhairevir her pecefu form appeirit,  
The wylde besties of the hill war cheirit ;

The ouf playit lythely runde the feilde,  
The lordlye byson lowit and kneilit ;  
The dun deire wooit with manyr bland,  
And courtit aneath her lille hand.  
And quhan at evin the woodlandis rung,  
Quhan hymis of other worildis scho sung,  
In extacye of sweite devotion,  
Och, then the glen was all in motion.  
The wyld bestis of the foreste came,  
Brak fra their buchtis and faldis the tame,  
And govit by, charmit and amaizit ;  
Even the dull cattil crunit and gazit,  
And waulit about in ankshuse payne  
For some the misterye to explayne.  
The bizerd cam with the thrystle-coke ;  
The korbye left hir houf in the roke ;  
The black-burd alang with the egil flew ;  
The hynde cam trippyng ouir the dew ;  
The ouf and the kydd their raik began,  
And the tod, and the lam, and the leurit ran ;  
The hauke and the herne attour them hung,  
And the merland the maives forehooit their yung ;

And all in ane pecefu ryng war hurlit :  
It was lyke ane eve in a sinlesse worlde !

Quhan a munthe and a day had comit and gene,  
Kilmeny sochte the greinwud wene ;  
There layde her doune on the levis se greine,  
But Kilmeny on yirth was nevir mayre seine.  
But och, the wordis that fell fra her muthe,  
War wordis of wonder, and wordis of truthe !  
But all the land was in fiere and dreide,  
For they kendna whether scho was lyving or  
deide.

It walsna her heme, and scho culdna remayne ;  
Scho left this worlde of sorrow and paine,  
And returnit to the land of thochte againe.

---

He ceased ; and all with kind concern  
Blest in their hearts the bard of Ern.

By that the chill and piercing air,  
The pallid hue of ladies fair,

The hidden yawn, and drumbly eye,  
Loudly announced the morning nigh.  
Beckoned the Queen with courteous smile,  
And breathless silence gazed the while:—

“ I hold it best, my lords,” she said,  
“ For knight, for dame, and lovely maid,  
At wassail, wake, or revel hall,  
To part before the senses pall.  
Sweet though the draught of pleasure be,  
Why should we drain it to the lee?  
Though here the minstrel’s fancy play,  
Light as the breeze of summer-day ;  
Though there in solemn cadence flow,  
Smooth as the night-wind o’er the snow ;  
Now bound away with rolling sweep,  
Like tempest o’er the raving deep ;  
High on the morning’s golden screen,  
Or casemate of the rainbow lean ;—  
Such beauties were in vain prolonged,  
The soul is cloyed, the minstrel wronged.



“ Loud is the morning-blast, and chill,  
The snow-drift speeds along the hill ;  
Let ladies of the storm beware,  
And lords of ladies take a care ;  
From lanes and alleys guard them well,  
Where lurking ghost or sprite may dwell ;  
But most avoid the dazzling flare,  
And spirit of the morning air ;  
Hide from their eyes that hideous form,  
The ruthless angel of the storm.  
I wish, for every gallant's sake,  
That none may rue our royal wake :  
I wish what most his heart approves,  
And every lady what she loves,—  
Sweet be her sleep on bed of down,  
And pleasing be her dreams till noon.  
And when you hear the bugle's strain,  
I hope to see you all again.”—

Whether the Queen to fear inclined,  
Or spoke to cheer the minstrel's mind,



Certes, she spoke with meaning leer,  
And ladies smiled her words to hear.  
Yet, though the dawn of morning shone,  
No lady from that night-wake gone,  
Not even the Queen, durst sleep alone.  
And scarce had Sleep, with throb and sigh,  
O'er breast of snow, and moistened eye,  
Outspread his shadowy canopy,  
When every fervid female mind,  
Or sailed with witches on the wind,  
Drank, unobserved, the potent wine,  
Or floated on the foamy brine.  
Some strove the land of thought to win,  
Impelled by hope, withstood by sin ;  
And some with angry spirit stood  
By lonely stream, or pathless wood.  
And oft was heard the broken sigh,  
The half-formed prayer, and smothered cry ;  
So much the minds of old and young  
Were moved by what the minstrels sung.

What Lady Gordon did or said  
Could not be learned from lady's maid,  
And Huntley swore and shook his head.  
But she and all her buskined train  
Appeared not at the wake again.

END OF NIGHT THE SECOND.

THE  
QUEEN'S WAKE.

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NIGHT THE THIRD.

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QUEEN'S WARE

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THE

QUEEN'S WAKE.

NIGHT THE THIRD.

THE storm had ceased to shroud the hill ;
The morning's breath was pure and chill ;
And when the sun rose from the main,
No eye the glory could sustain.
The icicles so dazzling bright ;
The spreading wold so smooth and white ;
The cloudless sky, the air so sheen,
That roes on Pentland's top were seen ;

And Grampian mountains, frowning high,
Seemed froze amid the northern sky.
The frame was braced, the mind set free
To feat, or brisk hilarity.

The sun, far on his southern throne,
Glowed in stern majesty alone:
'Twas like the loved, the toilsome day,
That dawns on mountains west away,
When the furred Indian hunter hastes
Far up his Appalachian wastes,
To range the savage haunts, and dare
In his dark home the sullen bear.
And ere that noonday-sun had shone
Right on the banks of Duddingston,
Heavens! what a scene of noise and glee,
And busy brisk anxiety!
There age and youth their pastime take
On the smooth ice that chained the lake.
The Highland chief, the Border knight,
In waving plumes, and baldricks bright,

Join in the bloodless friendly war,
The sounding-stone to hurl afar.
The hair-breadth aim, the plaudits due,
The rap, the shout, the ardour grew,
Till drowsy day her curtain drew.

The youth, on cramps of polished steel,
Joined in the race, the curve, the wheel ;
With arms outstretched, and foot aside,
Like lightning o'er the lake they glide ;
And eastward far their impulse keep,
Like angels journeying o'er the deep.

When night her spangled flag unfurled
Wide o'er a wan and sheeted world,
In keen debate homeward they hie,
For well they knew the wake was nigh.

By mountain sheer, and column tall,
How solemn was that evening fall !
The air was calm, the stars were bright,
The hoar frost flightered down the night ;

But oft the listning groups stood still,
For spirits talked along the hill.
The fairy tribes had gone to won
In southland climes beneath the sun ;
By shady woods, and waters sheen,
And vales of everlasting green,
To sing of Scotia's woodlands wild,
Where human face had never smiled.
The ghost had left the haunted yew,
The wayward bogle fled the clough,
The darksome pool of crisp and foam
Was now no more the kelpie's home :
But polar spirits sure had spread
O'er hills which native fays had fled ;
For all along from cliff and tree,
On Arthur's hill, and Salisbury,
Came voices floating down the air
From viewless shades that lingered there :
The words were fraught with mystery ;
Voices of men they could not be.
Youths turned their faces to the sky,
With beating heart, and bended eye ;

Old chieftains walked with hastened tread,
Loath that their hearts should bow to dread.
They feared the spirits of the hill
To sinful Scotland boded ill.

Orion up his baldrick drew,
The evening star was still in view,
Scarce had the Pleiades cleared the main,
Or Charles reyoked his golden wain,
When from the palace turrets rang
The bugle's note with warning clang;
Each tower, each spire, in music spake,
"Haste, nobles, to Queen Mary's wake."
The blooming maid ran to bedight,
In spangled lace, and robe of white,
That graceful emblem of her youth,
Of guileless heart, and maiden truth.
The matron decked her candid frame
In moony broach, and silk of flame;
And every Earl and Baron bold
Sparkled in clasp and loop of gold.

'Twas the last night of hope and fear,
That bards could sing, or Sovereign hear ;
And just ere rose the Christmas sun,
The envied prize was lost and won.

The bard that night who foremost came
Was not enrolled, nor known his name ;
A youth he was of manly mold,
Gentle as lamb, as lion bold ;
But his fair face, and forehead high,
Glowed with intrusive modesty.

'Twas said by bank of southland stream
Glided his youth in soothing dream ;
The harp he loved, and wont to stray
Far to the wilds and woods away,
And sing to brooks that gurgled bye
Of maiden's form and maiden's eye ;
That, when this dream of youth was past,
Deep in the shade his harp he cast ;

In busy life his cares beguiled,
His heart was true, and fortune smiled.
But when the royal wake began,
Joyful he came the foremost man,
To see the matchless bard approved,
And list the strains he once had loved.

Two nights had passed—the bards had sung,—
Queen Mary's harp from ceiling hung,
On which was graved her lovely mold,
Beset with crowns and flowers of gold;
And many a gem of dazzling dye
Glowed on that prize to minstrel's eye.

The youth had heard each minstrel's strain,
And, fearing northern bard would gain,
To try his youthful skill was moved,
Not for himself, but friends he loved.

Mary Scott.

THE FOURTEENTH BARD'S SONG.

Lord Pringle's steed neighs in the stall,
His panoply is irksome grown,
His plumed helm hangs in the hall,
His broad claymore is berry brown.
No more his bugle's evening peal
Bids vassal arm and yeoman ride,
To drive the deer of Otterdale,
Or foray on the Border side.
Instead of whoop and battle knell,
Of warrior's song, and revel free,
Is heard the lute's alluring swell
Within the halls of Torwoodlee.

Sick lies his heart without relief ;

Tis love that breeds the warrior's woe,
For daughter of a froward chief,
A freebooter, his mortal foe.

But O, that maiden's form of grace,
And eye of love, to him were dear !
The smile that dimpled on her face
Was deadlier than the Border spear.

That form was not the poplar's stem,
That smile the dawning's purple line ;
Nor was that eye the dazzling gem
That glows adown the Indian mine.

But would you praise the poplar pale,
Or morn in wreath of roses drest ;
The fairest flower that woos the vale,
Or down that clothes the solan's breast ;

A thousand times beyond, above,
What rapt enthusiast ever saw ;
Compare them to that mould of love,—
Young Mary Scott of Tushilaw !

The war-flame glows on Ettrick pen,
Bounds forth the foray swift as wind,
And Tushilaw and all his men
Have left their homes afar behind.

O lady, lady, learn thy creed,
And mark the watch-dog's boist'rous din !
The abbot comes with book and bead,
O haste and let the father in !

And, lady, mark his locks so gray,
His beard so long, and colour wan ;
O he has mourned for many a day,
And sorrowed o'er the sins of man !

And yet so stately is his mien,
His step so firm, and breast so bold ;
His brawny leg and form I ween
Are wonderous for a man so old.

Short was his greeting, short and low,
His blessing short as prayer could be ;
But oft he sighed, and boded woe,
And spoke of sin and misery.

To shrift, to shrift, now ladies all,
Your prayers and Ave Marias learn ;
Haste, trembling, to the vesper hall,
For ah ! the priest is dark and stern.

Short was the task of lady old,
Short as confession well could be ;
The abbot's orisons were cold,
His absolutions frank and free.

Go, Mary Scott, thy spirit meek
Lay open to the searcher's eye;
And let the tear bedew thy cheek,
Thy sins are of a crimson dye.

For many a lover thou hast slain,
And many yet lies sick for thee,—
Young Gilmanscleuch and Deloraine,
And Pringle, lord of Torwoodlee.

Tell every wish thy bosom near,
No other sin, dear maid, hast thou;
And well the abbot loves to hear
Thy plights of love and simple vow.

“ Why stays my Mary Scott so long?
What guilt can youth and beauty wail?
Of fervent thought, and passion strong,
Heavens ! what a sickening tedious tale !”

O lady cease ; the maiden's mind,
Though pure as morning's cloudless beam,
A crime in every wish can find,
In noontide glance, and midnight dream.

To woman's heart when fair and free,
Her sins seem great and manifold ;
When sunk in guilt and misery,
No crime can then her soul behold.

'Tis sweet to see the opening flower
Spread its fair bosom to the sun ;
'Tis sweet to hear in vernal bower
The thrush's earliest hymn begun :

But sweeter far the prayer that wrings
The tear from maiden's beaming eye ;
And sweeter far the hymn she sings
In grateful holy ecstasy.

The mass was said, but cold and dry
That mass to heaven the father sent ;
With book, and bead, and rosary,
The abbot to his chamber went.

The watch-dog rests with folded eye
Beneath the portal's gray festoon ;
The wildered Ettrick wanders bye,
Loud murmuring to the careless moon.

The warder lists with hope and dread
Far distant shout of fray begun ;
The cricket tunes his tiny reed,
And harps behind the embers dun.

Why does the warder bend his head,
And silent stand the casement near ?
The cricket stops his little reed,
The sound of gentle step to hear.

O many a wight from Border brake
Has reaved the drowsy warden round ;
And many a daughter lain awake,
When parents trowed them sleeping sound.

The abbot's bed is well down spread,
The abbot's bed is soft and fair,
The abbot's bed is cold as lead—
For why—the abbot is not there.

Was that the blast of bugle, borne
Far on the night-wind, wavering shrill ?
'Tis nothing but the shepherd's horn
That keeps the watch on Cakra hill.

What means the warder's answering note ?
The moon is west, 'tis near the day ;
I thought I heard the warriors shout,
'Tis time the abbot were away !

The bittern mounts the morning air,
And rings the sky with quavering croon ;
The watch-dog sallies from his lair,
And bays the wind and setting moon.

'Tis not the breeze, nor bittern's wail,
Has roused the guarder from his den ;
Along the bank, in belt and mail,
Comes Tushilaw and all his men.

The abbot, from his casement, saw
The Forest chieftain's proud array ;
He heard the voice of Tushilaw—
The abbot's heart grew cold as clay !

“ Haste, maidens, call my lady fair,
That room may for my warriors be ;
And bid my daughter come and share
The cup of joy with them and me.

Say we have fought and won the fray,
Have lowered our haughty foeman's pride ;
And we have driven the richest prey
That ever lowed by Ettrick side."

To hear a tale of vanquished foes
His lady came right cheerfully ;
And Mary Scott, like morning rose,
Stood blushing at her father's knee.

Fast flowed the warrior's ruthless tale,
And ay the red cup past between ;
But Mary Scott grew lily pale,
And trembled like the aspin green.

"Now lady give me welcome cheer,
Queen of the Border thou shalt be ;
For I have brought thee gold and gear,
And humbled haughty Torwoodlee."

I beat his yeomen in the glen,
I loosed his horses from the stall,
I slew the blood-hound in his den,
And sought the chief through tower and hall.

'Tis said in hamlet mean and dark
Nightly he lies with leman dear ;
O, I would give ten thousand mark,
To see his head upon my spear !

Go, maidens, every mat be spread
On heather haum, or roegrass heap,
And make for me the scarlet bed,
For I have need of rest and sleep."

"Nay, my good lord, make other choice,
In that you cannot rest to day ;
For there in peaceful slumber lies
A holy abbot, old and gray."

The chieftain's cheek to crimson grew,
Dropt from his hand the rosy wine—
“An abbot! curse the canting crew!
An abbot sleep in couch of mine!

Now, lady, as my soul shall thrive,
I'd rather trust my child and thee,
With my two greatest foes alive,
The king of Scots and Torwoodlee.

The lazy hoard of Melrose vale
Has brought my life, my all to stake:
O, lady! I have heard a tale,
The thought o't makes my heart to ache!

Go, warriors, hale the villain forth,
Bring not his loathful form to me;
The gate stands open to the north,
The rope hangs o'er the gallows tree.

There shall the burning breeze of noon
Rock the old sensual sluggard blind ;
There let him swing, till sun and moon
Have three times left the world behind."

O abbot, abbot, say thy prayers,
With orisons load every breath ;
The Forest trooper's on the stairs,
To drag thee to a shameful death.

O abbot, abbot, quit thy bed,
Ill armed art thou to meet the strife ;
Haste, don thy beard, and quoif thy head,
And guard the door for death or life.

Thy arm is firm, thy heart is stout,
Yet thou canst neither fight nor flee ;
But beauty stands thy guard without,
Yes, beauty weeps and pleads for thee."

Proud, ruthless man, by vengeance driven,
 Regardless hears a brother plead ;
Regardless sees the brand of heaven
 Red quivering o'er his guilty head :

But once let woman's soothing tongue
 Implore his help or clemency,
Around him let her arms be flung,
 Or at his feet her bended knee ;

The world's a shadow ! vengeance sleeps !
 The child of reason stands revealed—
When beauty pleads, when woman weeps,
 He is not man who scorns to yield."

Stern Tushilaw is gone to sleep,
 Laughing at woman's dread of sin ;
But first he bade his warriors keep
 All robbers out, and abbots in.

The abbot from his casement high
Looked out to see the peep of day ;
The scene that met the abbot's eye
Filled him with wonder and dismay.

'Twas not the dews of dawning mild,
The mountain's hues of silver gray,
Nor yet the Ettrick's windings wild,
By belted holm and bosky brae ;

Nor moorland Rankleburn, that raved
By covert, clough, and greenwood shaw ;
Nor dappled flag of day, that waved
In streamers pale from Gilmans-law :

But many a doubted ox there lay
At rest upon the castle lea ;
And there he saw his gallant gray,
And all the steeds of Torwoodlee.

“ Beshrew the wont !” the abbot said,
“ The charge runs high for lodging here ;
The guard is deep, the path way-laid,
My homilies shall cost me dear.

Come well, come woe, with dauntless core.
I'll kneel, and con my breviary ;
If Tushilaw is versed in lore,
’Twill be an awkward game with me.”

Now Tushilaw he waked and slept,
And dreamed and thought till noontide hour ;
But ay this query upmost kept,
“ What seeks the abbot in my tower ?”

Stern Tushilaw came down the stair
With doubtful and indignant eye,
And found the holy man at prayer,
With book, and cross, and rosary.

“ To book, to book, thou reaver red,
Of absolution thou hast need ;
The sword of heaven hangs o’er thy head,
Death is thy doom, and hell thy meed !

I’ll take my chance, thou priest of sin,
Thy absolutions I disdain ;
But I will noose thy bearded chin,
If thus thou talkest to me again.

Declare thy business, and thy name,
Or short the route to thee is given ?”—
“ The abbot I of Coldinghame,
My errand is the cause of heaven.”—

“ That shalt thou prove ere we two part ;
Some robber thou, or royal spy :
But, villain, I will search thy heart,
And chain thee in the deep to lie.

Hence with thy rubbish, hest and ban,
Whinyards to keep the weak in awe ;
The scorn of heaven, the shame of man—
No books nor beads for Tushilaw !”—

“ Oh ! lost to mercy, faith, and love !
Thy bolts and chains are nought to me ;
I'll call an angel from above,
That soon will set the pris'ner free.”—

Bold Tushilaw, o'er strone and steep,
Pursues the roe and dusky deer ;
The abbot lies in dungeon deep,
The maidens wail, the matrons fear.

The sweetest flower on Ettrick shaw
Bends its fair form o'er grated keep ;
Young Mary Scott of Tushilaw
Sleeps but to sigh, and wakes to weep.

Bold Tushilaw, with horn and hound,
Pursues the deer o'er holt and lea ;
And rides and rules the Border round,
From Philiphaugh to Gilnockye.

His page rode down by Melrose fair,
His page rode down by Coldinghame ;
But not a priest was missing there,
Nor abbot, friar, nor monk of name.

The evening came; it was the last
The abbot in this world should see ;
The bonds are firm, the bolts are fast,
No angel comes to set him free.

Yes, at the stillest hour of night
Softly unfolds the iron door ;
Beamed through the gloom unwonted light,
That light a beauteous angel bore.

Fair was the form that o'er him hung,
And fair the hands that set him free ;
The trembling whispers of her tongue
Softer than seraph's melody.

The abbot's soul was all on flame,
Wild transport through his bosom ran ;
For never angel's airy frame
Was half so sweet to mortal man !

Why walks young Mary Scott so late,
In veil and cloak of cramasye ?
The porter opens wide the gate,
His bonnet moves, and bends his knee.

Long may the wondering porter wait,
Before the lady form return ;
" Speed, abbot speed, nor halt nor bate,
Nor look thou back to Rankleburn !"

The day arrives, the ladies plead
In vain for yon mysterious wight ;
For Tushilaw his doom decreed,
Were he an abbot, lord, or knight.

The chieftain called his warriors stout,
And ranged them round the gallows tree,
Then bade them bring the abbot out,
The fate of fraud that all might see.

The men return of sense bereft,
Faulter their tongues, their eye-balls glare ;
The door was locked, the fetters left—
All close ! the abbot was not there !

The wondering warriors bow to God,
And matins to the Virgin hum ;
But Tushilaw he gloomed and strode,
And walked into the castle dumb.

But to the Virgin's sacred name
The vow was paid in many a cell ;
And many a rich oblation came,
For that amazing miracle.

Lord Pringle walked his glens alone,
Nor flock nor lowing herd he saw ;
But even the king upon the throne
Quaked at the name of Tushilaw.

Lord Pringle's heart was all on flame,
Nor peace nor joy his bosom knew ;
'Twas for the kindest, sweetest dame,
That ever brushed the Forest dew.

Gone is one month with smile and sigh,
With dream by night and wish by day ;
A second came with moistened eye ;
Another came and past away.

Why is the flower of yonder pile
 Bending its stem to court decay,
And Mary Scott's benignant smile
 Like sun-beam in a winter day ?

Sometimes her colour's like the rose,
 Sometimes 'tis like the lily pale ;
The flower that in the forest grows
 Is fallen before the summer gale.

A mother's fostering breast is warm,
 And dark her doubts of love I ween ;
For why—she felt its early harm—
 A mother's eye is sharp and keen !

'Tis done ! the woman stands revealed !
 Stern Tushilaw is waked to see ;
The bearded priest so well concealed,
 Was Pringle, lord of Torwoodlee !

Oh never was the thunder's jar,
The red tornado's wasting wing,
Nor all the elemental war,
Like fury of the Border king.

He laughed aloud—his faulchion eyed—
A laugh of burning vengeance borne!—
“Does thus the coward trow,” he cried,
“To hold his conqueror's power to scorn!

Thinks Tushilaw of maids or wives,
Or such a thing as Torwoodlee!
Had Mary Scott a thousand lives,
These lives were all too few for me!

Ere midnight, in the secret cave,
This sword shall pierce her bosom's core,
Though I go childless to my grave,
And rue the deed for evermore!

O had I lulled the imp to rest
When first she lisped her name to me,
Or pierced her little guileless breast
When smiling on her nurse's knee !”

“ Just is your vengeance, my good lord,
’Tis just and right our daughter die ;
Far sharper than a foeman’s sword
Is family shame and injury.

But trust the ruthless deed to me ;
I have a vial potent good ;
Unmeet that all the Scotts should see
A daughter’s corse embalmed in blood !

Unmeet her gallant kinsmen know
The guilt of one so fair and young ;
No cup should to her mem’ry flow,
No requiem o’er her grave be sung.

My potent draught has erst proved true
 Beneath my own and husband's eye ;
Trust me, ere falls the morning dew,
 In dreamless sleep shall Mary lie !"—

" Even go thy way, thy words are true,
 I knew thy dauntless soul before ;
But list—if thou deceivest me too,
 Thou hast a head ! I say no more."—

Stern Tushilaw strode o'er the ley,
 And, wondering, by the twilight saw
A crystal tear drop from his eye,
 The first e'er shed by Tushilaw !

O grievous are the bonds of steel,
 And blasted hope 'tis hard to prove ;
More grievous far it is to feel
 Ingratitude from those we love.

“ What brings my lady mother here,
Pale as the morning shower and cold?
In her dark eye why stands the tear?
Why in her hand a cup of gold ?”—

“ My Mary, thou art ill at rest,
Fervid and feverish is thy blood ;
Still yearns o’er thee thy mother’s breast,
Take this, my child, ’tis for thy good !”—

O sad, sad was young Mary’s plight !
She took the cup—no word she spake :
She had even wished that very night
To sleep, and never more to wake.

She took the cup—she drank it dry,
Then pillowed soft her beauteous head,
And calmly watched her mother’s eye ;
But O that eye was hard to read !

Her moistened eyes, so mild and meek,
Soon sunk their auburn fringe beneath;
The ringlets on her damask cheek
Heaved gentler with her stealing breath !

She turned her face unto the wall,
Her colour changed to pallid clay ;
Long ere the dews began to fall,
The flower of Ettrick lifeless lay !

Why underneath her winding sheet
Does brodered silk her form enfold ?
Why is cold Mary's buskined feet
All laced with belts and bands of gold ?

“ What boots to me these robes so gay ?
To wear them now no child have I !
They should have graced her bridal day,
Now they must in the church-yard lie !

I thought to see my daughter ride,
In golden gear and cramasye,
To Mary's fane, the loveliest bride
Ere to the Virgin bent the knee.

Now I may by her funeral wain
Ride silent o'er the mountain gray :
Her revel hall, the gloomy fane ;
Her bridal bed, the cheerless clay !"—

Why that rich snood with plume and lace
Round Mary's lifeless temples drawn ?
Why is the napkin o'er her face,
A fragment of the lily lawn ?

" My Mary has another home ;
And far, far though her journey be,
When she to Paradise shall come,
Then will my child remember me !

O many a flower was round her spread,
And many a pearl and diamond bright,
And many a window round her head
Shed on her form a bootless light !

Lord Pringle sat on Maygill brae,
Pondering on war and vengeance meet ;
The Cadan toiled in narrow way,
The Tweed rolled far beneath his feet.

Not Tweed, by gulf and whirlpool mazed,
Through dark wood-glen, by him was seen ;
For still his thought-set eye was raised
To Ettrick mountains, wild and green.

Sullen he sat, unstaied, unblest,
He thought of battle, broil, and blood ;
He never crossed, he never wist
Till by his side a Palmer stood.

“Haste, my good lord, this letter read,
Ill bodes it listless thus to be ;
Upon a die I’ve set my head,
And brought this letter far to thee.”—

Lord Pringle looked the letter on,
His face grew pale as winter sky ;
But, ere the half of it was done,
The tear of joy stood in his eye.

A purse he to the Palmer threw,
Mounted the cleft of aged tree,
Three times aloud his bugle blew,
And hasted home to Torwoodlee.

’Twas scarcely past the hour of noon
When first the foray whoop began ;
And, in the wan light of the moon,
Through March and Teviotdale it ran.

Far to the south it spread away,
 Startled the hind by fold and tree ;
And ay the watchword of the fray
 Was, " Ride for Ker and Torwoodlee !"

When next the day began to fade,
 The warriors round their chieftains range ;
And many a solemn vow they made,
 And many an oath of fell revenge.

The Pringles' plumes indignant dance—
 It was a gallant sight to see ;
And many a Ker, with sword and lance,
 Stood rank and file on Torwoodlee.

As they fared up yon craigy glen,
 Where Tweed sweeps round the Thorny-hill,
Old Gideon Murray and his men
 The foray joined with right good will.

They hasted up by Ploro side,
And north above Mount-Benger turn,
And loathly forced with them to ride
Black Douglas of the Craigy-burn.

When they came nigh Saint Mary's lake
The day-sky glimmered on the dew ;
They hid their horses in the brake,
And lurked in heath and braken clough.

The lake one purple valley lay,
Where tints of glowing light were seen ;
The ganza waved his cuneal way,
With yellow oar, and quoif of green.

The dark cock bayed above the coomb,
Throned mid the wavy fringe of gold,
Unwreathed from dawning's fairy loom,
In many a soft vermilion fold.

The tiny skiffs of silver mist
Lingered along the slumbering vale ;
Belled the gray stag with fervid breast
High on the moors of Meggat-dale.

There hid in clough and hollow den,
Gazing around the still sublime,
There lay Lord Pringle and his men
On beds of heath, and moorland thyme.

That morning found rough Tushilaw
In all the father's guise appear ;
An end of all his hopes he saw
Shrouded in Mary's gilded bier.

No eye could trace without concern
The suffering warrior's troubled look ;
The throbs that heaved his bosom stern,
No ear could bear, no heart could brook.

“ Woe be to thee, thou wicked dame !
My Mary’s prayers and accents mild
Might well have rendered vengeance lame—
This hand could ne’er have slain my child !

But thou, in frenzied fatal hour,
Reft the sweet life thou gavest away,
And crushed to earth the fairest flower
That ever breathed the breeze of day.

My all is lost, my hope is fled,
The sword shall ne’er be drawn for me ;
Unblest, unhonoured my gray head—
My child ! would I had died for thee !”—

The bell tolls o’er a new made grave ;
The lengthened funeral train is seen
Stemming the Yarrow’s silver wave,
And darkening Dryhope holms so green.

When nigh the virgin's fane they drew,
Just by the verge of holy ground,
The Kers and Pringles left the clough,
And hemmed the wondering Scotts around.

Vassal and peasant seized with dread,
Sped off, and looked not once behind;
And all who came for wine and bread,
Fled like the chaff before the wind.

But all the Scotts together flew,—
For every Scott of name was there,—
In sullen mood their weapons drew,
And back to back for fight prepare.

Rough was the onset—boast, nor threat,
Nor word, was heard from friend or foe;
At once began the work of fate,
With perilous thrust, and deadly blow.

O but the Harden lads were true,
And bore them bravely in the broil !
The doughty laird of wild Buccleugh
Raged like a lion in the toil.

Young Raeburn tilted gallantly ;
But Ralph of Gilmanscleuch was slain,
Philip and Hugh of Baillilee,
And William laird of Deloraine.

But Francis, Lord of Thirlestane,
To all the gallant name a soil,
While blood of kinsmen fell like rain,
Crept underneath a braken coil.

Old Tushilaw, with sword in hand,
And heart to fiercest woes a prey,
Seemed courting every foeman's brand,
And fought in hottest of the fray.

In vain the gallant kinsmen stood
 Wedged in a firm and bristled ring ;
Their funeral weeds are bathed in blood,
 No corslets round their bosoms cling.

Against the lance and helmed file
 Their courage, might, and skill were vain ;
Short was the conflict, short the while
 Ere all the Scotts were bound or slain.

When first the hostile band upsprung,
 The body in the church was laid,
Where vows were made, and requiems sung,
 By matron, monk, and weeping maid.

Lord Pringle came—before his eye
 The monks and maidens kneeled in fear ;
But Lady Tushilaw stood bye,
 And pointed to her Mary's bier !

“Thou lord of guile, and malice keen,
What boots this doleful work to thee !
Could Scotland such a pair have seen
As Mary Scott and Torwoodlee ?”—

Lord Pringle came, no word he spake,
Nor owned the pangs his bosom knew ;
But his full heart was like to break
In every throb his bosom drew.

“O I had weened with fondest heart—
Woe to the guileful friend who lied !—
This day should join us ne’er to part,
This day that I should win my bride !

But I will see that face so meek,
Cold, pale, and lifeless though it be ;
And I will kiss that comely cheek,
Once sweeter than the rose to me.”—

With trembling hand he raised the lid,
Sweet was the perfume round that flew ;
For there were strewed the roses red,
And every flower the Forest knew.

He drew the fair lawn from her face,
'Twas decked with many a costly wreath ;
And still it wore a soothing grace
Even in the chill abodes of death.

And ay he prest the cheek so white,
And ay he kissed the lips beloved,
Till pitying maidens wept outright,
And even the frigid monks were moved.

Why starts Lord Pringle to his knee ?
Why bend his eyes with watchful strain ?
The maidens shriek his mien to see ;
The startled priests inquire in vain !

Was that a sob, an earthly sigh,
That heaved the flowers so lightly shed ?
'Twas but the wind that wandered bye,
And kissed the bosom of the dead !

Are these the glowing tints of life
O'er Mary's cheek that come and fly ?
Ah, no ! the red flowers round are rife,
The rosebud flings its softened dye.

Why grows the gazer's sight so dim ?
Stay, dear illusion, still beguile !
Thou art worth crowns and worlds to him—
Last, dear illusion, last a while !

Short was thy sway, frenzied and short,
For ever fell the veil on thee ;
Thy startling form of fears the sport,
Vanished in sweet reality !

'Tis past ! and darkly stands revealed
A mother's cares and purpose deep :
That kiss, the last adieu that sealed,
Waked Mary from her death-like sleep !

Slowly she raised her form of grace,
Her eyes no ray conceptive flung ;
And O, her mild, her languid face,
Was like a flower too early sprung !

“ O I lie sick and weary here,
My heart is bound in moveless chain ;
Another cup, my mother dear,
I cannot sleep though I would fain ! ” —

She drank the wine with calm delay,
She drank the wine with pause and sigh :
Slowly, as wakes the dawning day,
Dawned long lost thought in Mary's eye.

She looked at pall, she looked at bier,
At altar, shrine, and rosary ;
She saw her lady mother near,
And at her side brave Torwoodlee !

'Twas all a dream, nor boded good,
A phantom of the fevered brain !
She laid her down in moaning mood,
To soothe her woes in sleep again.

Needs not to paint that joyful hour,
The nuptial vow, the bridal glee,
How Mary Scott, the Forest flower,
Was borne a bride to Torwoodlee.

Needs not to say, how warriors prayed
When Mary glided from the dome ;
They thought the Virgin's holy shade
In likeness of the dead had come.

Diamond and ruby rayed her waist,
And twinkled round her brow so fair ;
She wore more gold upon her breast
Than would have bought the hills of Yair.

A foot so light, a form so meet,
Ne'er trode Saint Mary's lonely lea ;
A bride so gay, a face so sweet,
The Yarrow braes shall never see.

Old Tushilaw deigned not to smile,
No grateful word his tongue could say,
He took one kiss, blest her the while,
Wiped his dark eye, and turned away.

The Scotts were freed, and peace restored ;
Each Scott, each Ker, each Pringle swore,
Swore by his name, and by his sword,
To be firm friends for evermore.

Lord Pringle's hills were stocked anew,
Drove after drove came nightly free ;
But many a Border Baron knew
Whence came the dower to Torwoodlee.

Scarce had the closing measure rung,
When from the ring the minstrel sprung,
And his gilt harp, of flowery frame,
Left ready for the next that came.
Loud were the plaudits,—all the fair
Their eyes turned to the royal chair :
They looked again,—no bard was there !
But whisper, smile, and question ran,
Around the ring anent the man ;
While all the nobles of the south
Lauded the generous stranger youth.

The next was bred on southern shore,
Beneath the mists of Lammermore ;

And long, by Nith and crystal Tweed,
Had taught the Border youth to read.
The strains of Greece, the bard of Troy,
Were all his theme, and all his joy.

Well toned his voice of wars to sing ;
His hair was dark as raven's wing ;
His eye an intellectual lance,
No heart could bear its searching glance :
But every bard to him was dear ;
His heart was kind, his soul sincere.

When first of royal wake he heard,
Forthwith it chained his sole regard :
It was his thought, his hourly theme,
His morning prayer, his midnight dream.
Knights, dames, and squires of each degree,
He deemed as fond of songs as he,
And talked of them continually.
But when he heard the Highland strain,
Scarce could his breast his soul contain ;

'Twas all unequalled, and would make
Immortal bards ! immortal wake !
About Dunedin streets he ran,
Each knight he met, each maid, each man,
In field, in alley, tower, or hall,
The wake was first, the wake was all.

Alike to him the south or north,
So high he held the minstrel worth,
So high his ardent mind was wrought,
Once of himself he scarcely thought.
Dear to his heart the strain sublime,
The strain admired in ancient time ;
And, of his minstrel honours proud,
He strung his harp too high, too loud.

King Edward's Dream.

THE FIFTEENTH BARD'S SONG.

The heath-cock had whirred at the break of the morn,
The moon of her tassels of silver was shorn,
When hoary king Edward lay tossing in ire,
His blood in a ferment, his bosom on fire;
His battle files, stretched o'er the valley, were still
As Eden's pine forests that darkened the hill.

He slept—but his visions were loathly and grim :
How quivered his lip ! and how quaked every limb !
His dull moving eye showed how troubled his rest,
And deep were the throbs of his labouring breast.

He saw the Scot's banner red streaming on high ;
The fierce Scottish warriors determined and nigh ;
Their columns of steel, and bright gleaming before,
The lance, the broad target, and Highland claymore.

And, lo ! at their head, in stern glory appeared,
That hero of heroes so hated and feared ;
'Twas the exile of Rachrin that led the array,
And Wallace's spirit was pointing the way :
His eye was a torch, beaming ruin and wrath,
And graved on his helmet was—*Vengeance or Death !*

In far Ethiopia's desert domain,
Where whirlwinds new mountains up-pile on the plain,
Their crested brown billows, fierce curling on high,
O'ershadow the sun, and are tossed to the sky ;
But, meeting each other, they burst and recoil,
Mix, thunder, and sink, with a reeling turmoil :
As dreadful the onset that Edward beheld,
As fast his brave legions were heaped on the field.

The plaided blue Highlander, swift as the wind,
Spread terror before him, and ruin behind.
Thick clouds of blood-vapour brood over the slain,
And Pembroke and Howard are stretched on the plain.

The chieftain he hated, all covered with blood,
Still nearer and nearer approached where he stood ;
He could not retreat, and no succour was near—
“ Die, scorpion !” he cried, and pursued his career.
The king felt the iron retreat from the wound,
No hand to uphold him, he sunk on the ground :
His spirit escaped on the wings of the wind,
Left terror, confusion, and carnage behind,
Till on the green Pentland he thought he sat lone,
And pondered on troubles and times that were gone.

He looked over meadow, broad river, and downe,
From Ochel's fair mountains to Lammermore brown ;
He still found his heart and desires were the same ;
He wished to leave Scotland nor sceptre nor name.

He thought, as he lay on the green mountain thyme,
A spirit approached him in manner sublime.
At first she appeared like a streamer of light,
But still as she neared she was formed to his sight.
Her robe was the blue silken veil of the sky,
The drop of the amethyst deepened its dye ;

Her crown was a helmet, emblazoned with pearl ;
Her mantle the sunbeam, her bracelets the beryl ;
Her hands and her feet like the bright burning levin ;
Her face was the face of an angel from heaven :
Around her the winds and the echoes grew still,
And rainbows were formed in the cloud of the hill.

Like music that floats o'er the soft heaving deep,
When twilight has lulled all the breezes asleep,
The wild fairy airs in our forests that rung,
Or hymn of the sky by a seraph when sung ;
So sweet were the tones on his fancy that broke,
When the guardian of Scotland's proud mountains thus
spoke :—

“ What boots, mighty Edward, thy victories won :
'Tis over ; thy sand of existence is run ;
Thy laurels are faded, dispersed in the blast ;
Thy soul from the bar of Omnipotence cast,
To wander bewildered o'er mountain and plain,
O'er lands thou hast steeped with the blood of the slain.

I heard of thy guerdon, I heard it on high :
Thou'rt doomed on those mountains to linger and lie,
The mark of the tempest, the sport of the wind,
The tempest of conscience, the storm of the mind,
Till people thou'st hated, and sworn to subdue,
Triumphant from bondage shall burst in thy view,
Their sceptre and liberty bravely regain,
And climb to renown over mountains of slain.

I thought (and I joined my endeavours to thine,)
The time was arrived when the two should combine ;
For 'tis known that they will 'mong the hosts of the sky,
And we thought that blest æra of concord was nigh.
But ages unborn yet shall flit on the wing,
And Scotland to England ere then give a king ;
A father to monarchs, whose flourishing sway
The ocean and ends of the earth shall obey.

See yon little hamlet o'ershadowed with smoke,
See yon hoary battlement throned on the rock,
Even there shall a city in splendour break forth,
The haughty Dunedin, the queen of the north ;

There learning shall flourish, and liberty smile,
The awe of the world, and the pride of the isle.

But thy lonely spirit shall roam in dismay,
And weep o'er thy labours so soon to decay.
In yon western plain, where thy power overthrew
The bulwarks of Caledon, valiant and few;
Where beamed the red faulchion of ravage and wrath;
Where tyranny, horsed on the dragons of death,
Rode ruthless through blood of the honoured and just.
When Græme and brave Stuart lay bleeding in dust,
The wailings of liberty pierced the sky;
Th' Everlasting, in pity, averted his eye!

Even there shall the flower of thy nations combined,
Proud England, green Erin, and Normandy joined,
Exulting in numbers, and dreadful array,
Led on by Carnarvon, to Scotland away,
As thick as the snow-flakes that pour from the pole,
Or silver-maned waves on the ocean that roll.
A handful of heroes, all desperate driven,
Impelled by the might and the vengeance of heaven;

By them shall his legions be all overborne,
And melt from the field like the mist of the morn;
The Thistle shall rear her rough front to the sky,
And the Rose and the Shamrock at Carron shall die.

How couldst thou imagine those spirits of flame
Would stoop to oppression, to slavery, and shame!
Ah! never; the lion may couch to thy sway,
The mighty leviathan bend and obey;
But the Scots, round their king and broad banner unfurled,
Their mountains will keep against thee and the world."

King Edward awoke with a groan and a start,
The vision was vanished, but not from his heart!
His courage was high, but his vigour was gone;
He cursed the Scotch nation, and bade them lead on.
His legions moved on like a cloud of the west;
But fierce was the fever that boiled in his breast.
On sand of the Solway they rested his bed,
Where the soul of the king and the warrior fled!
He heard not the sound of the evening curfew;
But the whisper that died on his tongue, was—"subdue!"

The bard had sung so bold and high,
While patriot fire flashed from his eye,
That ere King Edward won to rest,
Or sheet was spread above his breast,
The harp-strings jarred in wild mistone ;
The minstrel throbbed, his voice was gone.
Upon his harp he leaned his head,
And softly from the ring was led.

The next was from a western vale,
Where Nith winds slowly down the dale ;
Where play the waves o'er golden grain,
Like mimic billows of the main.
Of the old elm his harp was made,
That bent o'er Cluden's loneliest shade :
No gilded sculpture round her flamed,
For his own hand that harp had framed,
In stolen hours, when labour done,
He strayed to view the parting sun.
O when the toy to him so fair,
Began to form beneath his care,

How danced his youthful heart with joy !
How constant grew the dear employ !
The sun would chamber in the Ken ;
The red star rise o'er Locherben ;
The solemn moon, in sickly hue,
Waked from her eastern couch of dew,
Would half way gain the vault on high,
Bathe in the Nith, slow stealing bye,
And still the bard his task would ply.

When his first notes, from covert grey,
Arrested maiden on her way ;
When ceased the reaper's evening tale,
And paused the shepherd of the dale,—
Bootless all higher worldly bliss,
To crown our minstrel's happiness !
What all the joys by fortune given,
To cloyless song, the gift of heaven ?

That harp could make the matron stare,
Bristle the peasant's hoary hair,

Make patriot-breasts with ardour glow,
And warrior pant to meet the foe ;
And long by Nith the maidens young
Shall chaunt the strains their minstrel sung :
At ewe-bught, or at evening fold,
When resting on the daisied wold,
Combing their locks of waving gold,
Oft the fair group enrapt, shall name
Their lost, their darling Cunninghame :
His was a song beloved in youth,—
A tale of weir—a tale of truth.

Dumlanrig.

THE SIXTEENTH BARD'S SONG.

Who's he stands at Dumlanrig's gate ?
Who raps so loud, and raps so late ?
Nor warder's threat, nor porter's growl,
Question, nor watch-dog's angry howl,
He once regards, but rap and call,
Thundering alternate, shake the wall,

The captive, stretched in dungeon deep,
Waked from his painful visioned sleep;
His meagre form from pavement raised,
And listened to the sounds amazed:
Both bayle and keep rang with the din,
And Douglas heard the noise within.

“ Ho ! rise, Dumlanrig ! all's at stake !
Ho ! rise, Dumlanrig ! Douglas, wake !—
Blow, warder—blow thy warning shrill,
Light up the beacon on the hill,
For round thee reaves thy ruthless foe.—
Arise, Dumlanrig ! Douglas, ho ! ”

His fur-cloak round him Douglas threw,
And to the crennel eager flew.
“ What news ? what news ? thou stalwart groom,
Who thus, in midnight's deepest gloom,
Bring'st to my gate the loud alarm
Of foray wide, and country harm ?

What are thy dangers? what thy fears?
Say out thy message, Douglas hears."

"Haste, Douglas! Douglas, arm with speed,
And mount thy fleetest battle steed;
For Lennox, with the southern host,
Whom thou hast baulked and curbed the most,
Like locusts from the Solway blown,
Are spread upon thy mountains brown;
Broke from their camp in search of prey,
They drive thy flocks and herds away;
Roused by revenge, and hunger keen,
They've swept the hills of fair Dalveen;
Nor left thee bullock, goat, or steer,
On all the holms of Durisdeer.

"One troop came to my father's hall;
They burnt our tower,—they took our all.
My dear, my only sister May,
By force the ruffians bore away;

Nor kid, nor lamb, bleats in the glen,
Around all lonely Locherben !

“ My twenty men, I have no moe,
Eager to cross the roaming foe,
Well armed with hawberk and broad sword,
Keep ward at Cample's rugged ford.
Before they bear their prey across,
Some Southrons shall their helmets lose,
If not the heads those helmets shield,
O, haste thee, Douglas, to the field !”
With that his horse around he drew,
And down the path like lightning flew.

“ Arm,” cried the Douglas, “ one and all !”
And vanished from the echoing wall.
“ Arm !” was the word ; along it ran
Through manor, bayle, and barbican ;
And clank and clatter burst at once
From every loop of hall and sconce.

With whoop of groom, and warder's call,
And prancing steeds, 'twas hurry all.

At first, like thunder's distant tone,
'The rattling din came rolling on,
Echoed Dumlanrig woods around ;
Louder and louder swelled the sound,
Till like the sheeted flame of wonder,
That rends the shoals of heaven asunder.

When first the word, "to arms!" was given,
Glowed all the eastern porch of heaven ;
A wreathy cloud of orient brown,
Had heralded the rising moon,
Whose verge was like a silver bow,
Bending o'er Ganna's lofty brow ;
And ere above the mountain blue
Her wasted orb was rolled in view,
A thousand men, in armour sheen,
Stood ranked upon Dumlanrig green.

The Nith they stemmed in firm array;
For Cample-ford they bent their way.
Than Douglas and his men that night,
Never saw yeoman nobler sight;
Mounted on tall curvetting steed,
He rode undaunted at their head;
His shadow on the water still,
Like giant on a moving hill.
The ghastly bull's-head scowled on high,
Emblem of death to foeman's eye;
And bloody hearts on streamers pale,
Waved wildly in the midnight gale.

O, haste thee, Douglas! haste and ride!
Thy kinsmen's corpses stem the tide!
What red, what dauntless youth is he,
Who stands in Cample to the knee?
Whose arm of steel, and weapon good,
Still dyes the stream with Southern blood,
While round him fall his faithful men?
'Tis Morison of Locherben.

O, haste thee, Douglas, to the fray,
Ere won be that important way!
The Southron's countless prey, within
The dreadful coils of Crighup linn,
No passage from the moor can find,—
The wood below, the gulf behind :
One ford there is, and one alone,
And in that ford stands Morison.
Who passes there, or man or beast,
Must make their passage o'er his breast,
And over heaps of mangled dead,
That dam red Cample from its bed.
His sister's cries his soul alarm,
And add new vigour to his arm.
His twenty men are waned to ten.
O, haste to dauntless Locherben !

The Southron's baulked, impatient turn,
And crowd once more the fatal bourn.
All desperate grew the work of death,
No yielding but with yielding breath ;

Even still lay every death-struck man,
For footing to the furious van.
The little band was seized with dread,
Behind their rampart of the dead :
Power from their arms began to fly,
And hope within their breasts to die,
When loud they heard the cheering word
Of—" Douglas ! Douglas !" cross the ford :
Then turned the Southron swift as wind,
For fierce the battle raged behind.

O, stay, brave Morison ! O, stay !
Guard but that pass till break of day ;
Thy flocks, thy sister to retrieve,
That task to doughty Douglas leave :
Let not thine ardour all betray,—
Thy might is spent—brave warrior, stay.

O, for the lyre of heaven, that rung
When Linden's lofty hymn was sung !

Or his, who from the height beheld
The reeling strife of Flodden field !
Then far on wing of genius borne
Should ring the wonders of that morn :
Morn !—ah ! how many a warrior bold,
That morn was never to behold !
When rival rank to rank drew nigh,
When eye was fixed on foeman's eye,
When lowered was lance, and bent was bow,
And faulchion clenched to strike the blow,
No breath was heard, nor clank of mail,
Each face with rage grew deadly pale.
Trembled the moon's reluctant ray ;
The breeze of heaven sunk soft away.

So furious was that onset's shock,
Destruction's gates at once unlock :
'Twas like the earthquake's hollow groan,
When towers and towns are overthrown :
'Twas like the river's midnight crush,
When snows dissolve, and torrents rush ;

When fields of ice, in rude array,
Obstruct its own resistless way :
'Twas like the whirlwind's rending sweep :
'Twas like the tempest of the deep,
Where Corrybraken's surges driven,
Meet, mount, and lash the breast of heaven.

'Twas foot to foot, and brand to brand ;
Oft hilt to hilt, and hand to hand ;
Oft gallant foemen, woe to tell,
Dead in each other's bosoms fell !
The horsemen met with might and main,
Then reeled, and wheeled, and met again.
A thousand spears on hawberks bang ;
A thousand swords on helmets clang.
Where might was with the feebler blent,
Still there the line of battle bent ;
As oft recoiled from flank assail,
While blows fell thick as rattling hail.
Nature stood mute that fateful hour,
All save the ranks on Cample moor,

And mountain goats that left their den,
And bleating fled to Garroch glen.

Dumlanrig, ay in battle keen,
The foremost in the broil was seen :
Woe to the warrior dared withstand
The progress of his deadly brand !
He sat so firm, he reined so well,
Whole ranks before his charger fell.
A valiant youth kept by his side,
With crest and armour crimson-dyed ;
Charged still with him the yielding foe,
And seconded his every blow.
The Douglas wondered whence he came,
And asked his lineage and his name.
'Twas he who kept the narrow way,
Who raised at first the battle fray,
And roused Dumlanrig and his men,—
Brave Morison of Locherben.

“ My chief,” he said, “ forgive my fear
For one than life to me more dear ;

But late I heard my sister cry,
' Dumlanrig, now thy weapon ply.'
Her guard waits in yon hollow lea,
Beneath the shade of spreading tree."

Dumlanrig's eye with ardour shone ;
" Follow !" he cried, and spurred him on.
A close gazoon the horsemen made,
Douglas and Morison the head,
And through the ranks impetuous bore,
By dint of lance and broad claymore,
Mid shouts, and groans of parting life,
For hard and doubtful was the strife.
Behind a knight, firm belted on,
They found the fair May Morison.
But why, through all Dumlanrig's train,
Search her bright eyes, and search in vain ?
A stranger mounts her on his stead ;
Brave Morison, where art thou fled ?
The drivers for their booty feared,
And, soon as Cample-ford was cleared,

To work they fell, and forced away
Across the stream their mighty prey.
The bleating flocks in terror ran
Across the bloody breast of man ;
Even the dull cattle gazed with dread,
And, lowing, foundered o'er the dead.

The Southrons still the fight maintain ;
Though broke, they closed and fought again,
Till shouting drivers gave the word,
That all the flocks had cleared the ford ;
Then to that pass the bands retire,
And safely braved Dumlanrig's ire.
Rashly he tried, and tried in vain,
That steep, that fatal path to gain ;
Madly prolonged th' unequal fray,
And lost his men, and lost the day.
Amid the battle's fiercest shock,
Three spears were on his bosom broke,
Then forced in flight to seek remede.
Had it not been his noble stead,

That swift away his master bore,
He ne'er had seen Dumlanrig more.

The day-beam, from his moonlight sleep,
O'er Queensberry began to peep;
Kneeled drowsy on the mountain fern,
At length rose tiptoe on the cairn,
Embracing, in his bosom pale,
The stars, the moon, and shadowy dale.
Then what a scene appal'd the view,
On Cample moor, as dawning grew!
Along the purple heather spread,
Lay mixed the dying and the dead;
Stern foemen there from quarrel cease,
Who ne'er before had met in peace.
Two kinsmen good the Douglas lost,
And full three hundred of his host;
With one by him lamented most,
The flower of all the Nithsdale men,
Young Morison of Locherben.

The Southrons did no foot pursue,
Nor seek the conflict to renew.
They knew not at the rising sun
What mischief they'd to Douglas done,
But to the south pursued their way,
Glad to escape with such a prey.

Brave Douglas, where thy pride of weir?
How stunted in thy bold career!
Woe, that the Lowther eagle's look
Should shrink before the Lowland rook!
Woe, that the lordly lion's paw
Of ravening wolves should sink in awe!
But doubly woe, the purple heart
Should tarnished from the field depart!

Was it the loss of kinsmen dear,
Or crusted scratch of Southern spear?
Was it thy dumb, thy sullen host,
Thy glory by misconduct lost?

Or thy proud bosom, swelling high,
Made the round tear roll in thine eye?
Ah! no; thy heart was doomed to prove
The sharper pang of slighted love.

What vision lingers on the heath,
Flitting across the field of death?
Its gliding motion, smooth and still
As vapour on the twilight hill,
Or the last ray of falling even
Shed through the parting clouds of heaven?

Is it a sprite that roams forlorn?
Or angel from the bowers of morn,
Come down a tear of heaven to shed,
In pity o'er the valiant dead?
No vain, no fleeting phantom this!
No vision from the bowers of bliss!
Its radiant eye, and stately tread,
Bespeak some beauteous mountain maid;

No rose of Eden's bosom meek,
Could match that maiden's moistened cheek ;
No drifted wreath of morning snow,
The whiteness of her lofty brow ;
Nor gem of India's purest dye,
The lustre of her eagle eye.

When beauty, Eden's bowers within,
First stretched the arm to deeds of sin ;
When passion burned, and prudence slept,
The pitying angels bent and wept.
But tears more soft were never shed,
No, not when angels bowed the head,
A sigh more mild did never breathe
O'er human nature whelmed in death,
Nor woe and dignity combine
In face so lovely, so benign,
As Douglas saw that dismal hour,
Bent o'er a corse on Cample moor.
A lady o'er her shield, her trust,
A brave, an only brother's dust.

What heart of man unmoved can lie,
When plays the smile in beauty's eye?
Or when a form of grace and love
To music's notes can lightly move?
Yes; there are hearts unmoved can see
The smile, the ring, the revelry;
But heart of warrior ne'er could bear
The beam of beauty's crystal tear.
Well was that morn the maxim proved,—
The Douglas saw, the Douglas loved.

“O, cease thy tears, my lovely May,
Sweet floweret of the banks of Ae,
His soul thou never canst recal;
He fell as warrior wont to fall.
Deep, deep the loss we both bewail:
But that deep loss to countervail,
Far as the day-flight of the hern,
From Locherben to green Glencairn,
From where the Shinnel torrents pour
To the lone vales of Crawford-moor,

The fairy links of Tweed and Lyne,
All, all the Douglas has, is thine,
And Douglas too; whate'er betide,
Straight thou shalt be Dumlanrig's bride."

"What! mighty chief, a bride to thee!
No, by yon heaven's High Majesty,
Sooner I'll beg, forlorn and poor,
Bent at thy meanest vassal's door,
Than look thy splendid halls within,
Thou deer wrapt in a lion's skin.

"Here lies the kindest, bravest man;
There lie thy kinsmen, pale and wan;
What boots thy boasted mountains green?
Nor flock, nor herd, can there be seen;
All driven before thy vaunting foe
To ruthless slaughter, bleat and low,
Whilst thou,—shame on thy dastard head!—
A wooing com'st amidst the dead.

“ O, that this feeble maiden hand
Could bend the bow, or wield the brand !
If yeomen mustered in my hall,
Or trooped obsequious at my call,
My country's honour I'd restore,
And shame thy face for evermore.
Go, first thy flocks and herds regain ;
Revenge thy friends in battle slain ;
Thy wounded honour heal ; that done,
Douglas may ask May Morison.”

Dumlanrig's blood to's bosom rushed,
His manly cheek like crimson blushed.
He called three yeomen to his side :
“ Haste, gallant warriors, haste and ride,
Warn Lindsay on the banks of Daur,
The fierce M' Turk and Lochinvaur :
Tell them that Lennox flies amain ;
That Maxwell and Glencairn are ta'en ;
Kilpatrick with the spoiler rides ;
The Johnston flies, and Jardine hides :

That I alone am left to fight,
For country's cause and sovereign's right.
My friends are fallen,—my warriors toiled,—
My towns are burnt,—my vassals spoiled :
Yet say—before to-morrow's sun
With amber tips the mountain dun,
Either that host of ruthless thieves
I'll scatter like the forest leaves,
Or my wrung heart shall cease to play,
And my right hand the sword to sway.
At Blackwood I'll their coming bide :
Haste, gallant warriors, haste and ride."

He spoke :—each yeoman bent his eye,
And forward stooped in act to fly ;
No plea was urged, no short demur ;
Each heel was turned to strike the spur.

As ever ye saw the red deer's brood,
From covert sprung, traverse the wood ;

Or heath-fowl beat the mountain wind,
And leave the fowler fixt behind ;
As ever ye saw three arrows spring
At once from yew-bow's twanging string,—
So flew the messengers of death,
And lessening, vanished on the heath.

The Douglas bade his troops with speed
Prepare due honours for the dead,
And meet well armed at evening still
On the green cone of Blackford-hill.
There came M'Turk to aid the war,
With troops from Shinnel glens and Scaur ;
Fierce Gordon with the clans of Ken,
And Lindsay with his Crawford men ;
Old Morton, too, forlorn and gray,
Whose son had fallen at break of day.

If troops on earth may e'er withstand
An onset made by Scottish brand,

Then lawless rapine sways the throng,
And conscience whispers—"this is wrong:"
But should a foe, whate'er his might,
To Scotia's dust dispute our right,
Or dare on native mountain claim
The poorest atom boasts our name,
Though high that warrior's banners soar,
Let him beware the broad claymore.

Scotland! thy honours long have stood,
Though rudely crompt, though rolled in blood,
Yet, bathed in warm and purple dew,
More glorious o'er the ruin grew.
Long flourish thy paternal line;
Arabia's lineage stoops to thine.

Dumlanrig found his foes secure,
Stretched on the ridge of Locher-moor.
The hum that wandered from their host,
Far on the midnight breeze was lost.

No deafening drum, no bugle's swell,
No watch-word past from centinel,
No slight vibration stirred the air
To warn the Scot a foe was there,
Save bleat of flocks that wandered slow,
And oxen's deep and sullen low.

What horrors o'er the warrior hang!
What vultures watch his soul to fang!
What toils! what snares!—he hies him on
Where lightnings flash, and thunders groan;
Where havock strikes whole legions low,
And death's red billows murmuring flow;
Yet still he fumes and flounders on,
Till crushed the moth—its mem'ry gone!

Why should the bard, who loves to mourn,
His maiden's scorn by mountain bourn,
Or pour his wild harp's fairy tone
From sounding cliff or green-wood lone,

Of slaughtered foemen proudly tell,
On deeds of death and horror dwell?

Dread was Dumlanrig's martial ire,
Fierce on the foe he rushed like fire.
Lindsay of Crauford, known to fame,
That night first gained a hero's name.
M'Turk stood deep in Southron gore,
And legions down before him bore;
And Gordon, with his Galloway crew,
O'er floundering ranks resistless flew.
Short was the strife!—they fled as fast
As chaff before the northern blast.

Dumlanrig's flocks were not a few,
And well their worth Dumlanrig knew;
But ne'er so proud was he before
Of his broad bounds, and countless store,
As when they strung up Nithsdale plain,
Well guarded to their hills again.

With Douglas' name the green-woods rung,
As battle-songs his warriors sung.
The banners streamed in double row,
The heart above, the rose below.
His visage glowed, his pulse beat high,
And gladness sparkled in his eye :
For why, he knew the lovely May,
Who in Kilpatrick's castle lay,
With joy his proud return would view,
And her impetuous censure rue.

Well judged he :—Why should haughty chief
Intrude himself on lady's grief,
As if his right, as nought but he
Were worthy her anxiety.
No, warrior : keep thy distance due ;
Beauty is proud and jealous too.
If fair and young thy maiden be,
Know she knew that ere told by thee.
Be kind, be gentle, heave the sigh,
And blush before her piercing eye ;

For though thou'rt noble, brave, and young,
If rough thy mien and rude thy tongue,
Though proudly towers thy trophied pile,
Hope not for beauty's yielding smile.
Oh ! well it suits the brave and high,
Gentle to prove in lady's eye.

Dumlanrig found his lovely flower
Fair as the sun-beam o'er the shower,
Gentle as zephyr of the plain,
Sweet as the rose-bud after rain :
Gone all her scorn and maiden pride,
She blushed Dumlanrig's lovely bride.

James of Dumlanrig, though thy name
Scarce vibrates in the ear of fame,
But for thy might and valour keen,
That gallant house had never been.

Blest be thy mem'ry, gallant man,
Oft flashed thy broad sword in the van ;

When stern rebellion reared the brand,
And stained the laurels of our land,
No knight, unshaken, stood like thee
In right of injured majesty :
Ev'n yet, o'er thy forgotten bier,
A minstrel drops the burning tear,
And strikes his wild harp's boldest string,
Thy honours on the breeze to fling,
That mountains once thine own may know
From whom the Queensberry honours flow.

Fair be thy mem'ry, gallant knight !
So true in love, so brave in fight !
Though o'er thy children's princely urn
The sculpture towers, and seraphs mourn,
O'er thy green grave shall wave the yew,
And heaven distil its earliest dew.

When ceased the bard's protracted song,
Circled a smile the fair among ;

The song was free, and soft its fall,
So soothing, yet so bold withal,
They loved it well, yet, sooth to say,
Too long, too varied was the lay.

'Twas now the witching time of night,
When reason strays, and forms that fright
Are shadowed on the palsied sight ;
When fancy moulds upon the mind
Light visions on the passing wind,
And woos, with faltering tongue and sigh,
The shades o'er memory's wilds that fly ;
And much the circle longed to hear
Of gliding ghost, or gifted seer,
That in that still and solemn hour
Might stretch imagination's power,
And restless fancy revel free
In painful, pleasing luxury.
Just as the battle tale was done,
The watchman called the hour of one.

Lucky the hour for him who came,
Lucky the wish of every dame,
The bard who rose at herald's call
Was wont to sing in Highland hall,
Where the wild chieftain of M'Lean
Upheld his dark Hebridian reign;
Where floated crane and clamorous gull
Above the misty shores of Mull;
And evermore the billows rave
Round many a saint and sovereign's grave.
There round Columba's ruins gray
The shades of monks are wont to stray,
And slender forms of nuns, that weep
In moonlight by the murmuring deep,
O'er early loves and passions crost,
And being's end for ever lost.
No earthly form their names to save,
No stem to flourish o'er their grave,
No blood of theirs beyond the shrine
To nurse the human soul divine,

Still cherish youth by time unworn,
And flow in ages yet unborn.
While mind, surviving evermore,
Unbodied seeks that lonely shore.

In that wild land our minstrel bred,
From youth a life of song had led,
Wandering each shore and upland dull
With Allan Bawn, the bard of Mull,
To sing the deeds of old Fingal,
In every cot and Highland hall.

Well knew he every ghost that came
To visit fair Hebridian dame,
Was that of monk or abbot gone,
Who once, in cell of pictured stone,
Of woman thought, and her alone.

Well knew he every female shade
To westland chief that visit paid

In morning pale, or evening dun,
Was that of fair lamenting nun,
Who once, in cloistered home forlorn,
Languished for joys in youth forsworn;
And oft himself had seen them glide
At dawning from his own bed-side.

Forth stepped he with uncourtly bow,
The heron plume waved o'er his brow,
His garb was blent with varied shade,
And round him flowed his Highland plaid.
But woe to Southland dame and knight
In minstrel's tale who took delight.
Though known the air, the song he sung
Was in the barbarous Highland tongue:
But tartaned chiefs in raptures hear
The strains, the words, to them so dear.

Thus run the bold portentous lay,
As near as Southern tongue can say.

The Abbot M'Kinnon.

THE SEVENTEENTH BARD'S SONG.

M'Kinnon's tall mast salutes the day,
And beckons the breeze in Iona bay;
Plays lightly up in the morning sky,
And nods to the green wave rolling bye;
The anchor upheaves, the sails unfurl,
The pennons of silk in the breezes curl;
But not one monk on holy ground
Knows whither the Abbot M'Kinnon is bound.

Well could that bark o'er the ocean glide,
Though monks and friars alone must guide;
For never man of other degree
On board that sacred ship might be.
On deck M'Kinnon walked soft and slow;
The haulers sung from the gilded prow;
The helmsman turned his brow to the sky,
Upraised his cowl, and upraised his eye,

And away shot the bark, on the wing of the wind,
Over billow and bay like an image of mind.

Aloft on the turret the monks appear,
To see where the bark of their abbot would bear ;
They saw her sweep from Iona bay,
And turn her prow to the north away,
Still lessen to view in the hazy screen,
And vanish amid the islands green.
Then they turned their eyes to the female dome,
And thought of the nuns till the abbot came home.

Three times the night with aspect dull
Came stealing over the moors of Mull ;
Three times the sea-gull left the deep,
To doze on the knob of the dizzy steep,
By the sound of the ocean lull'd to sleep ;
And still the watch-lights sailors see
On the top of the spire, and the top of Dun-ye ;
And the laugh rings through the sacred dome,
For still the abbot is not come home.

But the wolf that nightly swam the sound,
From Ross's rude impervious bound,
On the ravenous burrowing race to feed,
That loved to haunt the home of the dead,
To him Saint Columb had left in trust,
To guard the bones of the royal and just,
Of saints and of kings the sacred dust :
The savage was scared from his charnel of death,
And swam to his home in hunger and wrath,
For he momentarily saw, through the night so dun,
The cowering monk, and the veiled nun,
Whispering, sighing, and stealing away
By cross dark alley, and portal gray.
O, wise was the founder, and well said he,
“ Where there are women mischief must be.”

No more the watch-fires gleam to the blast,
M'Kinnon and friends arrive at last.
A stranger youth to the isle they brought,
Modest of mien and deep of thought,
In costly sacred robes bedight,
And he lodged with the abbot by day and by night.

His breast was graceful, and round withal,
His leg was taper, his foot was small,
And his tread so light that it flung no sound
On listening ear or vault around.
His eye was the morning's brightest ray,
And his neck like the swan's in Iona bay ;
His teeth the ivory polished new,
And his lip like the morel when glossed with dew,
While under his cowl's embroidered fold
Were seen the curls of waving gold.
This comely youth, of beauty so bright,
Abode with the abbot by day and by night.

When arm in arm they walked the isle,
Young friars would beckon, and monks would
smile;
But sires, in dread of sins unshriven,
Would shake their heads and look up to heaven,
Afraid the frown of the saint to see,
Who reared their temple amid the sea,

And pledged his soul to guard the dome,
Till virtue should fly her western home.
But now a stranger of hidden degree,
Too fair, too gentle a man to be,
This stranger of beauty and step so light
Abode with the abbot by day and by night.

The months and the days flew lightly bye,
The monks were kind and the nuns were shy;
But the gray haired sires, in trembling mood,
Kneel'd at the altar and kissed the rood.

M·Kinnon he dreamed that the saint of the isle
Stood by his side, and with courteous smile
Bade him arise from his guilty sleep,
And pay his respects to the God of the deep,
In temple that north in the main appeared,
Which fire from bowels of ocean had seared,
Which the giant builders of heaven had reared,
To rival in grandeur the stately pile
Himself had upreared in Iona's isle;

For round them rose the mountains of sand,
The fishes had left the coasts of the land,
And so high ran the waves of the angry sea,
They had drizzled the cross on the top of Dun-ye.
The cycle was closed, and the period run,
He had vowed to the sea, he had vowed to the sun,
If in that time rose trouble or pain,
Their homage to pay to the God of the main.
Then he bade him haste and the rites prepare,
Named all the monks should with him fare,
And promised again to see him there.

M'Kinnon awoke from his visioned sleep,
He opened his casement and looked on the deep;
He looked to the mountains, he looked to the
shore,
The vision amazed him and troubled him sore,
He never had heard of the rite before;
But all was so plain, he thought meet to obey,
He durst not decline, and he would not delay.

Uprose the abbot, uprose the morn,
Uprose the sun from the Bens of Lorn ;
And the bark her course to the northward framed,
With all on board whom the saint had named.

The clouds were journeying east the sky,
The wind was low and the swell was high,
And the glossy sea was heaving bright
Like ridges and hills of liquid light ;
While far on her lubric bosom were seen
The magic dyes of purple and green.

How joyed the bark her sides to lave !
She leaned to the lee, and she girdled the wave ;
Aloft on the stayless verge she hung,
Light on the steep wave veered and swung,
And the crests of the billows before her flung.
Loud murmured the ocean with gulp and with
growl,
The seal swam aloof and the dark sea fowl ;

The pye-duck sought the depth of the main,
And rose in the wheel of her wake again ;
And behind her, far to the southward, shone
A pathway of snow on the waste alone.

But now the dreadful strand they gain,
Where rose the sacred dome of the main ;
Oft had they seen the place before,
And kept aloof from the dismal shore,
But now it rose before their prow,
And what they beheld they did not know.
The tall grey forms, in close-set file,
Upholding the roof of that holy pile ;
The sheets of foam and the clouds of spray,
And the groans that rushed from the portals grey,
Appalled their hearts and drove them away.

They wheeled their bark to the east around,
And moored in basin, by rocks imbound ;
Then awed to silence, they trode the strand
Where furnaced pillars in order stand,

All framed of the liquid burning levin,
And bent like the bow that spans the heaven,
Or upright ranged in horrid array,
With purple of green o'er the darksome gray.

Their path was on wonderful pavement of old,
Its blocks all cast in some giant mould,
Fair hewn and grooved by no mortal hand,
With countermure guarded by sea and by land.
The watcher Bushella frowned over their way,
Enrobed in the sea-baize, and hooded with grey;
The warder that stands by that dome of the deep,
With spray-shower and rainbow, the entrance to
keep.

But when they drew nigh to the chancel of ocean,
And saw her waves rush to their raving devotion,
Astounded and awed to the antes they clung,
And listened the hymns in her temple she sung.
The song of the cliff, when the winter winds blow,
The thunder of heaven, the earthquake below,
Conjoined like the voice of a maiden would be,
Compared with the anthem there sung by the sea.

The solemn rows in that darksome den,
Were dimly seen like the forms of men,
Like giant monks in ages ago,
Whom the God of the ocean had seared to stone,
And bound in his temple for ever to lean,
In sackcloth of grey and visors of green,
An everlasting worship to keep,
And the big salt tears eternally weep.

So rapid the motion, the whirl and the boil,
So loud was the tumult, so fierce the turmoil,
Appalled from those portals of terror they turn,
On pillar of marble their incense to burn.
Around the holy flame they pray,
Then turning their faces all west away,
On angel pavement each bent his knee,
And sung this hymn to the God of the sea.

The Monks' Hymn.

Thou, who makest the ocean to flow,
Thou, who walkest the channels below ;
To thee, to thee, this incense we heap,
Thou, who knowest not slumber nor sleep,
Great spirit that movest on the face of the deep !
To thee, to thee, we sing to thee,
God of the western wind, God of the sea.

To thee, who gatherest with thy right hand
The little fishes around our land ;
To thee, who breathest in the bellied sail,
Rul'st the shark and the rolling whale,
Fling'st the sinner to downward grave,
Light'st the gleam on the mane of the wave,
Bid'st the billows thy reign deform,
Laugh'st in the whirlwind, sing'st in the storm,
Or risest like mountain amid the sea
Where mountain was never and never will be,

And rear'st thy proud and thy pale chaperoon
Mid walks of the angels and ways of the moon ;
To thee, to thee, this wine we pour,
God of the western wind, God of the shower.

To thee, who bid'st those mountains of brine
Softly sink in the fair moonshine,
And spread'st thy couch of silver light,
To lure to thy bosom the queen of the night,
Who weavest the cloud of the ocean dew,
And the mist that sleeps on her breast so blue ;
When the murmurs die at the base of the hill,
And the shadows lie rocked and slumbering still,
And the Solan's young, and the lines of foam,
Are scarcely heaved on thy peaceful home,
We pour this oil and this wine to thee,
God of the western wind, God of the sea!
“ Greater yet must the offering be.”

The monks gazed round, the abbot grew wan,
For the closing notes were not sung by man,
They came from the rock, or they came from the
air,
From voice they knew not, and knew not where;
But it sung with a mournful melody,
“ Greater yet must the offering be.”

In holy dread they past away,
And they walked the ridge of that isle so grey,
And saw the white waves toil and fret,
An hundred fathoms below their feet;
They looked to the countless isles that lie,
From Barra to Mull, and from Jura to Skye;
They looked to heaven, they looked to the main,
They looked at all with a silent pain,
As on places they were not to see again.

A little bay lies hid from sight,
O'erhung by cliffs of dreadful height;

When they drew nigh that airy steep,
They heard a voice rise from the deep,
And that voice was sweet as voice could be,
And they feared it came from the maid of the sea.

M'Kinnon lay stretched on the verge of the hill,
And peeped from the height on the bay so still ;
And he saw her sit on a weedy stone,
Laving her fair breast, and singing alone ;
And aye she sank the wave within,
Till it gurgled around her lovely chin,
Then combed her locks of the pale sea-green,
And ay this song was heard between.

The Mermaid's Song.

Matilda of Skye

Alone may lie,

And list to the wind that whistles by :

Sad may she be,
For deep in the sea,
Deep, deep, deep in the sea!
This night her lover shall sleep with me.
She may turn and hide
From the spirits that glide,
And the ghost that stands at her bed-side;
But never a kiss the vow shall seal,
Nor warm embrace her bosom feel;
For far, far down in the floors below,
Moist as this rock-weed, cold as the snow,
With the eel, and the clam, and the pearl of the
deep,
On soft sea-flowers her lover shall sleep,
And long and sound shall his slumber be
In the coral bowers of the deep with me.

The trembling sun, far, far away,
Shall pour on his couch a softened ray,
And his mantle shall wave in the flowing tide,
And the little fishes shall turn aside;

But the waves and the tides of the sea shall cease,
Ere wakes her love from his bed of peace.
No home!—no kiss!—No, never! never!
His couch is spread for ever and ever.

The abbot arose in dumb dismay,
They turned and fled from the height away,
For dark and portentous was the day.
When they came in view of their rocking sail,
They saw an old man who sat on the wale;
His beard was long, and silver grey,
Like the rime that falls at the break of day;
His locks like wool, and his colour wan,
And he scarcely looked like an earthly man.

They asked his errand, they asked his name,
Whereunto bound, and whence he came;
But a sullen thoughtful silence he kept,
And turned his face to the sea and wept.

Some gave him welcome, and some gave him scorn,
But the abbot stood pale, with terror o'erborne;
He tried to be jocund, but trembled the more,
For he thought he had seen the face before.

Away went the ship with her canvass all spread,
So glad to escape from that island of dread;
And skimmed the blue wave like a streamer of
light,
Till fell the dim veil 'twixt the day and the night.

Then the old man arose and stood up on the
prow,
And fixed his dim eyes on the ocean below;
And they heard him saying, "Oh, woe is me!
But great as the sin must the sacrifice be."
Oh, mild was his eye, and his manner sublime,
When he looked unto heaven, and said—"Now
is the time."
He looked to the weather, he looked to the lee,
He looked as for something he dreaded to see,

Then stretched his pale hand, and pointed his eye
To a gleam on the verge of the eastern sky.

The monks soon beheld, on the lofty Ben-More,
A sight which they never had seen before,
A belt of blue lightning around it was driven,
And its crown was encircled by morion of heaven,
And they heard a herald that loud did cry,
“ Prepare the way for the Abbot of I !”

Then a sound arose, they knew not where,
It came from the sea, or it came from the air,
’Twas louder than tempest that ever blew,
And the sea-fowls screamed, and in terror flew ;
Some ran to the cords, some kneeled at the shrine,
But all the wild elements seemed to combine ;
’Twas just but one moment of stir and commotion,
And down went the ship like a bird of the ocean.

This moment she sailed all stately and fair,
The next nor ship nor shadow was there,

But a boil that arose from the deep below,
A mounting gurgling column of snow;
It sunk away with a murmuring moan,
The sea is calm, and the sinners are gone.

END OF NIGHT THE THIRD.

CONCLUSION.

CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION.

FRIEND of the bard ! peace to thy heart,
Long hast thou acted generous part,
Long has thy courteous heart in pain
Attended to a feeble strain,
While oft abashed has sunk thine eye,—
Thy task is done, the Wake is bye.

I saw thy fear, I knew it just ;
'Twas not for minstrels long in dust,
But for the fond and ventrous swain
Who dared to wake their notes again ;
Yet oft thine eye has spoke delight,
I marked it well, and blest the sight :

No sour disdain, nor manner cold,
Noted contempt for tales of old;
Oft hast thou at the fancies smiled,
And marvelled at the legends wild:
Thy task is o'er; peace to thy heart!
For thou hast acted generous part.

'Tis said that thirty bards appeared,
That thirty names were registered,
With whom were titled chiefs combined,
But some are lost, and some declined.
Woe's me, that all my mountain lore
Has been unfit to rescue more!
And that my guideless rustic skill
Has told those ancient tales so ill.

The prize harp still hung on the wall;
The bards were warned to leave the hall,
Till courtiers gave the judgment true,
To whom the splendid prize was due.

What curious wight will pass with me,
The anxious motley group to see;
List their remarks of right and wrong,
Of skilful hand and faulty song,
And drink one glass the bards among?

There sit the men—behold them there,
Made maidens quake and courtiers stare,
Whose names shall future ages tell;
What do they seem? behold them well.
A simpler race you shall not see,
Awkward and vain as men can be;
Light as the fumes of fervid wine,
Or foam-bells floating on the brine,
The gossamers in air that sail,
Or down that dances in the gale.

Each spoke of others fame and skill,
With high applause, but jealous will.
Each song, each strain, he erst had known,
And all had faults except his own:

Plaudits were mixed with meaning jeers,
For all had hopes, and all had fears.

A herald rose the court among,
And named each bard, and named his song :
Rizzio was named from royal chair—
“ Rizzio ! ” re-echoed many a fair.
Each song had some that song approved,
And voices gave for bard beloved.
The first division called and done,
Gardyn stood highest just by one.

Queen Mary reddened, wroth was she
Her favourite thus outdone to see,
Reproved her squire in high disdain,
And caused him call the votes again.
Strange though it seem, the truth I say,
Feature of that unyielding day,
Her favourite's voters counted o'er,
Were found much fewer than before.

Glistened her eyes with pungent dew ;
She found with whom she had to do.

Again the royal gallery rung
With names of those who second sung,
When, spite of haughty Highland blood,
The bard of Ettrick upmost stood.

The rest were named who sung so late,
And after long and keen debate,
The specious nobles of the south
Carried the nameless stranger youth ;
Though Highland wrath was at the full,
Contending for the bard of Mull.

Then did the worst dispute begin,
Which of the *three* the prize should win.
'Twas party all—not minstrel worth,
But honour of the south and north ;
And nought was heard throughout the court,
But taunt, and sneer, and keen retort.

High run the words, and fierce the fume,
And from beneath each nodding plume
Red look was cast that vengeance said,
And palm on broad-sword's hilt was laid,
While Lowland jeer, and Highland mood,
Threatened to end the Wake in blood.

Rose from his seat the Lord of Mar,
Serene in counsel as in war.
“For shame,” said he, “contentents all!
This outrage done in royal hall,
Is to our country foul disgrace.
What! mock our Sovereign to her face!
Whose generous heart and taste refined,
Alike to bard and courtier kind,
This high repast for all designed.
For shame! your party strife suspend,
And list the counsel of a friend.

“Unmeet it is for you or me
To lessen one of all the three,
Each excellent in his degree;

But taste, as sapient sages tell,
Varies with climes in which we dwell.

“ Fair emblem of the Border dale,
Is cadence soft and simple tale ;
While stern romantic Highland clime,
Still nourishes the rude sublime.

“ If Border ear may taste the worth
Of the wild pathos of the north,
Or that sublimed by Ossian’s lay,
By forest dark and mountain gray,
By clouds which frowning cliffs deform,
By roaring flood and raving storm,
Enjoy the smooth, the fairy tale,
Or evening song of Teviotdale ;
Then trow you may the tides adjourn,
And Nature from her path-way turn ;
The wild-duck drive to mountain tree,
The capperkayle to swim the sea,

The heath-cock to the shelvy shore,
The partridge to the mountain hoar,
And bring the red-eyed ptarmigan
To dwell by the abodes of man.

“ To end this strife, unrulèd and vain,
Let all the three be called again ;
Their skill alternately be tried,
And let the Queen alone decide.
Then hushed be jeer and answer proud,—
He said, and all consenting, bowed.

When word was brought to bard's retreat,
The group were all in dire debate ;
The Border youth (that stranger wight)
Had quarrelled with the clans outright ;
Had placed their merits out of ken,
Deriding both the songs and men.
'Tis said—but few the charge believes,—
He branded them as fools and thieves.

Certes that war and woe had been,
For gleaming dirks unsheathed were seen,
For Highland minstrels ill could brook
His taunting word and haughty look.

The youth was chaffed, and with disdain
Refused to touch his harp again ;
Said he desired no more renown
Than keep those Highland boasters down ;
Now he had seen them quite outdone,
The south had two, the north but one ;
But should they bear the prize away,
For that he should not, would not play ;
He cared for no such guerdon mean,
Nor for the harp, nor for the Queen.

His claim withdrawn, the victors twain
Repaired to prove their skill again.

The song that tuneful Gardyn sung
Is still admired by old and young,

And long shall be at evening fold,
While songs are sung or tales are told.
Of stolen delights began the song,
Of love the Carron woods among,
Of lady borne from Carron side
To Barnard towers and halls of pride,
Of jealous lord and doubtful bride,
And ended with Gilmorice' doom
Cut off in manhood's early bloom.
Soft rung the closing notes and slow,
And every heart was steeped in woe.

The harp of Ettrick rung again,
Her bard, intent on fairy strain,
And fairy freak by moonlight shaw,
Sung young Tam Lean of Carterha'.

Queen Mary's harp on high that hung,
And every tone responsive rung,
With gems and gold that dazzling shone,
That harp is to the Highlands gone.

Gardyn is crowned with garlands gay,
 And bears the envied prize away.
 Long, long that harp, the hills among,
 Resounded Ossian's mounting song ;
 Waked slumbering lyres from every tree
 Adown the banks of Don and Dee,
 At length was borne, by beauteous bride,
 To woo the airs on Garry side.

When full two hundred years had fled,
 And all the northern bards were dead,
 That costly harp, of wonderous mould,
 Defaced of all its gems and gold,
 With that which Gardyn erst did play,
 Back to Dunedin found its way.

As Mary's hand the victor crowned,
 And twined the wreath his temples round,
 Loud were the shouts of Highland chief—
 The Lowlanders were dumb with grief ;

And the poor bard of Ettrick stood
Like statue pale, in moveless mood ;
Like ghost, which oft his eyes had seen
At gloaming in his glens so green.
Queen Mary saw the minstrel's pain,
And bade from bootless grief refrain.

She said a boon to him should fall
Worth all the harps in royal hall ;
Of Scottish song a countless store,
Precious remains of minstrel lore,
And cottage, by a silver rill,
Should all reward his rustic skill :
Did other gift his bosom claim,
He needed but that gift to name.

“ O, my fair Queen,” the minstrel said,
With faltering voice and hanging head,
“ Your cottage keep, and minstrel lore,—
Grant me a harp, I ask no more.

From thy own hand a lyre I crave,
That boon alone my heart can save."

" Well hast thou asked ; and be it known,
I have a harp of old renown
Hath many an ardent wight beguiled,
'Twas framed by wizard of the wild,
And will not yield one measure bland
Beneath a skilless stranger hand ;
But once her powers by progress found,
O there is magic in the sound.

" When worldly woes oppress thy heart,
And thou and all must share a part,
Should scorn be cast from maiden's eye,
Should friendship fail, or fortune fly ;
Steal with thy harp to lonely brake,
Her wild, her soothing numbers wake,
And soon corroding cares shall cease,
And passion's host be lulled to peace ;

Angels a gilded screen shall cast,
That cheers the future, veils the past.

“That harp will make the elves of eve
Their dwelling in the moon-beam leave,
And ope thine eyes by haunted tree
Their glittering tiny forms to see.
The flitting shades that woo the glen
’Twill shape to forms of living men,
To forms on earth no more you see,
Who once were loved, and aye will be;
And holiest converse you may prove
Of things below and things above.”

“That is, that is the harp for me!”
Said the rapt bard in ecstasy;
“This soothing, this exhaustless store,
Grant me, my Queen, I ask no more.”

O, when the weeping minstrel laid
The relic in his old grey plaid,

When Holyrood he left behind
To gain his hills of mist and wind,
Never was hero of renown,
Or monarch prouder of his crown.
He tript the vale, he climbed the coomb,
The mountain breeze began to boom ;
Ay when the magic chords it rung,
He raised his voice and blithely sung.
“ Hush, my wild harp, thy notes forbear ;
No blooming maids nor elves are here :
Forbear a while that witching tone,
Thou must not, canst not sing alone.
When Summer flings her watchet screen
At eve o'er Ettrick woods so green,
Thy notes shall many a heart beguile ;
Young beauty's eye shall o'er thee smile,
And fairies trip it merrily
Around my royal harp and me.”

Long has that harp of magic tone
To all the minstrel world been known :

Who has not heard her witching lays,
Of Ettrick banks and Yarrow braes ?
But that sweet bard, who sung and played
Of many a feat and Border raid,
Of many a knight and lovely maid,
When forced to leave his harp behind,
Did all her tuneful chords unwind ;
And many ages past and came
Ere man so well could tune the same.

Bangour the daring task essayed,
Not half the chords his fingers played ;
Yet even then some thrilling lays
Bespoke the harp of ancient days.

Redoubted Ramsay's peasant skill
Flung some strained notes along the hill ;
His was some lyre from lady's hall,
And not the mountain harp at all.

Langhorne arrived from Southern dale,
And chimed his notes on Yarrow vale,

They would not, could not, touch the heart;
His was the modish lyre of art.

Sweet rung the harp to Logan's hand :
Then Leyden came from Border land,
With dauntless heart and ardour high,
And wild impatience in his eye.
Though false his tones at times might be,
Though wild notes marred the symphony
Between, the glowing measure stole
That spoke the bard's inspired soul.
Sad were those strains, when hymn'd afar,
On the green vales of Malabar :
O'er seas beneath the golden morn,
They travelled, on the monsoon borne,
Thrilling the heart of Indian maid,
Beneath the wild banana's shade.—
Leyden, a shepherd wails thy fate,
And Scotland knows her loss too late !

The day arrived—blest be the day,
Walter the abbot came that way !—

The sacred relic met his view—
Ah! well the pledge of heaven he knew!
He screwed the chords, he tried a strain;
'Twas wild—he tuned and tried again,
Then poured the numbers bold and free,
The simple magic melody.

The land was charmed to list his lays;
It knew the harp of ancient days.
The Border chiefs, that long had been
In sepulchres unheard and green,
Passed from their mouldy vaults away,
In armour red, and stern array,
And by their moonlight halls were seen,
In visor, helm, and habergeon.
Even fairies sought our land again,
So powerful was the magic strain.

Blest be his generous heart for ay!
He told me where the relic lay;

Pointed my way with ready will,
Afar on Ettrick's wildest hill ;
Watched my first notes with curious eye,
And wondered at my minstrelsy :
He little weened, a parent's tongue
Such strains had o'er my cradle sung.

But when, to native feelings true,
I struck upon a chord was new ;
When by myself I 'gan to play,
He tried to wile my harp away.
Just when her notes began with skill,
To sound beneath the southern hill,
And twine around my bosom's core,
How could we part for evermore ?
'Twas kindness all, I cannot blame,
For bootless is the minstrel flame ;
But sure, a bard might well have known
Another's feelings by his own !

Of change enamoured, woe the while
He left our mountains, left the isle ;
And far to other kingdoms bore
The Caledonian harp of yore ;
But, to the hand that framed her true,
Only by force one strain she threw.
That harp he never more shall see,
Unless 'mong Scotland's hills with me.

Now, my loved harp, a while farewell ;
I leave thee on the old gray thorn ;
The evening dew will mar thy swell,
That waked to joy the cheerful morn.
Farewell, sweet soother of my woe.
Chill blows the blast around my head ;
And louder yet that blast may blow,
When down this weary vale I've sped.

The wreath lies on Saint Mary's shore ;
The mountain sounds are harsh and loud ;
The lofty brows of stern Clokmore
Are visored with the moving cloud.

But Winter's deadly hues shall fade
On moorland bald and mountain shaw,
And soon the rainbow's lovely shade
Sleep on the breast of Bowerhope Law ;

Then will the glowing suns of spring,
The genial shower and stealing dew,
Wake every forest bird to sing,
And every mountain flower renew.

But not the rainbow's ample ring,
That spans the glen and mountain gray,
Though fanned by western breeze's wing,
And sunned by summer's glowing ray,

To man decayed, can ever more
Renew the age of love and glee !
Can ever second spring restore
To my old mountain harp and me !

But when the hue of softened green
Spreads over hill and lonely lea,
And lowly primrose opes unseen
Her virgin bosom to the bee ;

When hawthorns breathe their odours far,
And carols hail the year's return,
And daisy spreads her silver star
Unheeded by the mountain burn ;

Then will I seek the aged thorn,
The haunted wild and fairy ring,
Where oft thy erring numbers born
Have taught the wandering winds to sing.

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NOTES.

Note I.

*Those wakes, now played by minstrels poor,
At midnight's darkest, chilliest hour,
Those humble wakes, now scorned by all,
Were first begun in courtly hall.*—Page 5.

In former days, the term *wake* was only used to distinguish the festive meeting which took place on the evening previous to the dedication of any particular church or chapel. The company sat up all the night, and, in England, amused themselves in various ways, as their inclinations were by habit or study directed. In Scotland, however, which was always the land of music and of song, music and song were the principal—often the only amusements of the wake. These songs were generally of a sacred or serious nature, and were chaunted to the old simple melodies of the country. *The Bush aboon Traquair, The Broom of Cowdenknows, John come kiss me now*, and many others, are still extant, set to the Psalms of David, and other spiritual songs, the Psalms being turned into a rude metre corresponding to the various measures of the tunes.

The difference in the application of the term which exists in the two sister kingdoms, sufficiently explains the consequences of the wakes in either. In England they have given rise to many fairs and festivals of long standing; and, from that origin, every fair or festival is denominated a *wake*. In Scotland the term is not used to distinguish any thing either subsistent or relative, save those serenades played by itinerant and nameless minstrels in the streets and squares of Edinburgh, which are inhabited by the great and wealthy, after midnight, about the time of the Christmas holidays. These seem to be the only remainder of the ancient wakes now in Scotland, and their effect upon a mind that delights in music is soothing and delicious beyond all previous conception. A person who can relish the concord of sweet sounds, gradually recalled from sleep by the music of the wakes, of which he had no previous anticipation, never fails of being deprived, for a considerable time, of all recollection, what condition, what place, or what world he is in. The minstrels who, in the reign of the Stuarts, enjoyed privileges which were even denied to the principal nobility, were, by degrees, driven from the tables of the great to the second, and afterwards to the common hall, that their music and songs might be heard, while they themselves were unseen. From the common hall they were obliged to retire to the porch or court; and so low has the characters of the minstrels descended, that the performers of the Christmas wakes are wholly unknown to the most part of those whom they serenade. They seem to be despised, but enjoy some small privileges, in order to keep up a name of high and ancient origin.

Note II.

*There rode the lords of France and Spain,
Of England, Flanders, and Lorrain,
While serried thousands round them stood,
From shore of Leith to Holyrood.—P. 10.*

Hollingshed describes Queen Mary's landing in Scotland, with her early misfortunes and accomplishments, after this manner: "She arrived at Leith the 20th of August, in the year of our Lord 1561, where she was honourably received by the Earl of Argyle, the Lord Erskine, the Prior of St Andrews, and the burgesses of Edinburgh, and conveyed to the Abbie of Holie-rood-house, for (as saith Buchannan) when some had spread abroad her landing in Scotland, the nobility and others assembled out of all parts of the realme, as it were to a common spectacle.

"This did they, partly to congratulate her return, and partly to shew the dutie which they alwais bear unto her (when she was absent,) either to have thanks therefore, or to prevent the slanders of the enemies: wherefore not a few, by these beginnings of her reign, did gesse what would follow, although, in those so variable notions of the minds of the people, every one was very desirous to see their Queen offered unto them, (unlooked for,) after so many haps of both fortunes as had befallen her. For, when she was but six days old, she lost her father among the cruel tempests of battle, and was, with great diligence, brought up by her mother, (being a chosen and worthy person), but yet left as a prize to others, by reason of civil sedition in Scotland, and of outward wars with other nations, being further led

abroad to all the dangers of frowning fortune, before she could know what evil did mean.

“ For leaving her own country, she was nourished as a banished person, and hardly preserved in life from the weapons of her enemies, and violence of the seas. After which fortune began to flatter her, in that she honoured her with a worthy marriage, which, in truth, was rather a shadow of joie to this queen, than any comfort at all. For, shortly after the same, all things were turned to sorrow, by the death of her new young husband, and of her old and grieved mother, by loss of her new kingdom, and by the doubtful possession of her old heritable realme. But as for these things she was both pitied and praised, so was she also for gifts of nature as much beloved and favoured, in that beneficial nature (or rather good God) had indued her with a beautiful face, a well composed body, an excellent wit, a mild nature, and good behaviour, which she had artificially furthered by courtly education and affable demeanor. Whereby, at the first sight, she wan unto her the hearts of most, and confirmed the love of her faithful subjects.”—*Holl.* p. 314. Arbroath Ed.

With regard to the music, which so deeply engaged her attention, we have different accounts by cotemporaries, and those at complete variance with one another. Knox says, “ Fyres of joy were set furth at night, and a companie of maist honest men, with instruments of musick, gave ther salutation at hir chalmer windo : the melodie, as sche alledged, lyked her weill, and sche willed the sam to be continued sum nychts eftir with grit dilligence.” But Dufresnoy, who was one of the party who accompanied the Queen, gives a very different account of these Scottish minstrels. “ We land-

ed at Leith," says he, "and went from thence to Edinburgh, which is but a short league distant. The Queen went there on horseback, and the lords and ladies who accompanied her upon the little wretched hackneys of the country, as wretchedly capparisoned; at sight of which the Queen began to weep, and to compare them with the pomp and superb palfreys of France. But there was no remedy but patience. What was worst of all, being arrived at Edinburgh, and retired to rest in the Abbey (which is really a fine building, and not at all partaking of the rudeness of that country), there came under her window a crew of five or six hundred scoundrels from the city, who gave her a serenade with wretched violins and little rebecks, of which there are enough in that country, and began to sing Psalms so miserably mistimed and mistuned, that nothing could be worse. Alas! what music! and what a night's rest!"

The Frenchman has had no taste for Scottish music—such another concert is certainly not in record.

Note III.

Ah! Kennedy, vengeance hangs over thine head!

Escape to thy native Glengarry forlorn.—P. 51.

The Clan Kennedy was only in the present age finally expelled from Glen-Garry, and forced to scatter over this and other countries. Its character among the Highlanders, is that of the most savage and irreclaimable tribe that ever infested the mountains of the north.

Note IV.

The Witch of Fife.—P. 67.

It may suffice to mention once for all, that the catastrophe of this tale, as well as the principal events

related in the tales of *Old David* and *McGregor*, are all founded on popular traditions. So is also the romantic story of Kilmeny's disappearance and revisiting her friends, after being seven years in Fairyland. The tradition bears some resemblance to the old ballads of Tam Lean and Thomas of Erceldon; and it is not improbable that all the three may have drawn their origin from the same ancient romance.

Note V.

Glen-Avin.—P. 95.

There are many scenes among the Grampian deserts which amaze the traveller who ventures to explore them; and in the most pathless wastes the most striking landscapes are often concealed. *Glen-Avin* exceeds them all in what may be termed stern and solemn grandeur. It is indeed a sublime solitude, in which the principal feature is deformity; yet that deformity is mixed with lines of wild beauty, such as an extensive lake, with its islets and bays, the straggling trees, and the spots of shaded green; and altogether it is such a scene as man has rarely looked upon. I spent a summer day in visiting it. The hills were clear of mist, yet the heavens were extremely dark—the effect upon the scene exceeded all description. My mind, during the whole day, experienced the same sort of sensation as if I had been in a dream; and on returning from the excursion, I did not wonder at the superstition of the neighbouring inhabitants, who believe it to be the summer haunt of innumerable tribes of fairies, and many other spirits, some of whom seem to be the most fantastic, and to behave in the most eccentric manner, of any I ever before heard of. Though the glen is up-

wards of twenty miles in length, and of prodigious extent, it contains no human habitation. It lies in the west corner of Banffshire, in the very middle of the Grampian hills.

Note VI.

Oft had that seer at dawn of morn

Beheld the fahm glide o'er the fell.—P. 37.

Fahm is a little ugly monster, who frequents the summits of the mountains around Glen-Avin, and no other place in the world that I know of. My guide, D. M'Queen, declared that he had himself seen him, and, by his description, Fahm appears to be no native of this world, but an occasional visitant, whose intentions are evil and dangerous. He is only seen about the break of day, and on the highest verge of the mountain. His head is twice as large as his whole body beside; and if any living creature cross the track over which he has passed before the sun shine upon it, certain death is the consequence. The head of that person or animal instantly begins to swell, grows to an immense size, and finally bursts. Such a disease is really incident to sheep on those heights, and in several parts of the kingdom, where the grounds are elevated to a great height above the sea; but in no place save Glen-Avin is Fahm blamed for it.

Note VII.

Even far on Yarrow's fairy dale,

The shepherd paused in dumb dismay,

And passing shrieks adown the vale,

Lured many a pitying hind away.—P. 102.

It was reckoned a curious and unaccountable circumstance, that, during the time of a great fall of snow by

night, a cry, as of a person who had lost his way in the storm, was heard along the vale of Ettrick from its head to its foot. What was the people's astonishment, when it was authenticated, that upwards of twenty parties had all been out with torches, lanthorns, &c. at the same hour of the night, calling and searching after some unknown person, whom they believed perishing in the snow, and that none of them had discovered any such person—the word spread; the circumstances were magnified—and the consternation became general. The people believed that a whole horde of evil spirits had been abroad in the valley, endeavouring to lure them abroad to their destruction—there was no man sure of his life!—prayers and thanksgivings were offered up to heaven in every hamlet, and resolutions unanimously formed, that no man perishing in the snow should ever be looked after again as long as the world stood.

When the astonishment had somewhat subsided by exhausting itself, and the tale of horror spread too wide ever to be recalled, a lad, without the smallest reference to the phenomenon, chanced to mention, that on the night of the storm, when he was out on the hill turning his sheep to some shelter, a flock of swans passed over his head toward the western sea, which was a sure signal of severe weather; and that at intervals they were always shouting and answering one another, in an extraordinary, and rather fearsome manner.—It was an unfortunate discovery, and marred the harmony of many an evening's conversation! In whatever cot the circumstance was mentioned, the old shepherds rose and went out—the youngers, who had listened to the prayers with reverence and fear, bit their lips—the matrons plied away at their wheels in silence—it was

singular that none of them should have known the voice of a swan from that of the devil!—they were very angry with the lad, and regarded him as a sort of blasphemer.

Note VIII.

See yon lone cairn so gray with age,

Above the base of proud Cairn-Gorm.—P. 104.

I only saw this old cairn at a distance; but the narrative which my guide gave me of the old man's loss was very affecting. He had gone to the forest in November to look after some goats that were missing, when a dreadful storm came suddenly on, the effects of which were felt throughout the kingdom. It was well enough known that he was lost in the forest, but the snow being so deep, it was judged impossible to find the body, and no one looked after it. It was not discovered until the harvest following, when it was found accidentally by a shepherd. The plaid and clothes which were uppermost not being decayed, it appeared like the body of a man lying entire; but when he began to move them, the dry bones rattled together, and the bare white skull was lying in the bonnet.

Note IX.

Old David.—P. 109.

I remember hearing a very old man, named David Laidlaw, who lived somewhere in the neighbourhood of Hawick, relate many of the adventures of this old moss-trooper, his great progenitor, and the first who ever bore the name. He described him as a great champion—a man quite invincible, and quoted several verses of a

ballad relating to him, which I never heard either before or since. I remember only one of them.

There was ane banna of barley meal
 Cam duntin dune by Davy's sheil,
 But out cam Davy and his lads,
 And dang the banna a' in blads.

He explained how this "bannock of barley meal" meant a rich booty, which the old hero captured from a band of marauders. He lived at Garwell in Eskdale-moor.

Lochy-Law, where the principal scene of this tale is laid, is a hill on the lands of Shorthope in the wilds of Ettrick. The Fairy Slack is up in the middle of the hill; a very curious ravine, and would be much more so when overshadowed with wood. The Back-burn which joins the Ettrick immediately below this hill, has been haunted time immemorial, both by the fairies, and the ghost of a wandering minstrel who was cruelly murdered there, and who sleeps in a lone grave a small distance from the ford.

Note X.

*And fears of witch and fairy raid,
 Have like a morning dream decayed.*—P. 128.

The fairies have now totally disappeared, and it is a pity they should; for they seem to have been the most delightful little spirits that ever haunted the Scottish dells. There are only very few now remaining alive who have ever seen them; and when they did, it was on Hallow-evenings while they were young, when the gospel was not very rife in the country. But, strange as it may appear, with the witches it is far otherwise. Never, in the most superstitious ages, was the existence of witches, or the influence of their diabolical power,

more firmly believed in, than by the inhabitants of the mountains of Ettrick Forest at the present day. Many precautions and charms are used to avert this influence, and scarcely does a summer elapse in which there are not some of the most gross incantations practised, in order to free flocks and herds from the blasting power of these old hags. There are two farmers still living, who will both make oath that they have wounded several old wives with shot as they were traversing the air in the shapes of moor-fowl and partridges.—A very singular amusement that for old wives!—I heard one of these *gentlemen* relate, with the utmost seriousness, and as a matter he did not wish to be generally known, that one morning, going out a fowling, he sprung a pair of moor-fowl in a place where it was not customary for moor-fowl to stay—he fired at the hen—wounded her, and eyed her until she alighted beyond an old dike—when he went to the spot, his astonishment may be well conceived, when he found *Nell* —, picking the hail out of her limbs! He was extremely vexed that he had not shot the cock, for he was almost certain he was no other than *Wallie Grieve*!!!

The tales and anecdotes of celebrated witches that are still related in the country, are extremely whimsical and diverting. The following is a *well-authenticated one*. A number of gentlemen were one day met for a chase on the lands of Newhouse and Kirkhope—their greyhounds were numerous and keen, but not a hare could they raise. At length a boy came to them, who offered to start a hare to them, if they would give him a guinea, and the black greyhound to hold. The demand was singular, but it was peremptory, and on other conditions he would not comply. The guerdon was accordingly paid—the hare was started, and the sport

afforded by the chace was excellent—the greyhounds were all baffled, and began to give up one by one, when one of the party came slyly behind the boy and cut the leish in which he held the black dog—away he flew to join the chace.—The boy losing all recollection, ran, bawling out with great vociferation, “Huy, mither, rin!! Hay, rin ye auld witch, if ever ye ran i’ yer life!! Rin, mither, rin!!” The black dog came fast up with her, and was just beginning to *moult her*, when she sprung in at the window of a little cottage and escaped. The riders soon came to the place, and entered the cot in search of the hare; but lo! there was no living creature there but the old woman lying panting in a bed, so breathless that she could not speak a word!!!

But the best old witch tale that remains, is that which is related of the celebrated Michael Scott, Master of Oakwad. Mr Walter Scott has preserved it, but so altered from the original way, that it is not easy to recognize it. The old people tell it as follows: There was one of Mr Michael’s tenants who had a wife that was the most notable witch of the age. So extraordinary were her powers, that the country people began to put them in competition with those of the Master, and say, that in *some cantrips* she surpassed him. Michael could ill brook such insinuations; for there is always jealousy between great characters, and went over one day with his dogs on pretence of hunting, but in reality with an intent of exercising some of his infernal power in the chastisement of Lucky — (I have the best reason in the world for concealing her reputed name.) He found her alone in the field weeding lint; and desired her, in a friendly manner, to show him some of her powerful art. She was very angry with him, and denied that she had any supernatural skill,

He, however, continuing to press her, she told him sharply to let her alone, else she would make him repent the day he troubled her. How she perceived the virtues of Michael's wand is not known, but in a moment she snatched it from his hand, and gave him three lashes with it. The knight was momentarily changed to a hare, when the malicious and inveterate hag cried out, laughing, "Shu, Michael, rin or dee!" and baited all his own dogs upon him. He was extremely hard hunted, and was obliged to swim the river, and take shelter in the sewer of his own castle from the fury of his pursuers, where he got leisure to change himself again to a man.

Michael being extremely chagrined at having been thus outwitted, studied a deadly revenge; and going over afterwards to hunt, he sent his man to Fauldshope to borrow some bread from Lucky — to give to his dogs, for that he had neglected to feed them before he came from home. If she gave him the bread, he was to thank her and come away; but if she refused it, he gave him a line written in red characters, which he was to lodge above the lintel as he came out. The servant found her baking of bread, as his master assured him he would, and delivered his message. She received him most ungraciously, and absolutely refused to give him any bread, alleging, as an excuse, that she had not as much as would serve her own reapers to dinner. The man said no more, but lodged the line as directed, and returned to his master. The powerful spell had the desired effect; Lucky — instantly threw off her clothes, and danced round and round the fire like one quite mad, singing the while with great glee,

"Master Michael Scott's man
Gam seekin bread an' gat nane,"

The dinner hour arrived, but the reapers looked in vain for their dame, who was wont to bring it to them to the field. The goodman sent home a servant girl to assist her, but neither did she return. At length he ordered them to go and take their dinner at home, for he suspected his spouse had taken some of her *tirravies*. All of them went inadvertently into the house, and, as soon as they passed beneath the mighty charin, were seized with the same mania, and followed the example of their mistress. The goodman, who had tarried behind, setting some shocks of corn, came home last; and hearing the noise ere ever he came near the house, he did not venture to go in, but peeped in at the window. There he beheld all his people dancing naked round and round the fire, and singing, "Master Michael Scott's man," with the most frantic wildness. His wife was by that time quite exhausted, and the rest were half trailing her around. She could only now and then pronounce a syllable of the song, which she did with a kind of scream, yet seemed as intent on the sport as ever.

The goodman mounted his horse, and rode with all speed to the Master, to enquire what he had done to his people which had put them all mad. Michael bade him take down the note from the lintel and burn it, which he did, and all the people returned to their senses. Poor Lucky —— died overnight, and Michael remained unmatched and alone in all the arts of enchantment and necromancy.

Note XI.

The Spectre's Cradle Song.—P. 136.

I mentioned formerly that the tale of M^r Gregor is

founded on a popular Highland tradition—so also is this Song of the Spectre in the introduction to it, which to me, at least, gives it a peculiar interest. As I was once travelling up Glen-Dochart, attended by Donald Fisher, a shepherd of that country, he pointed out to me some curious green dens, by the side of the large rivulet which descends from the back of Ben More, the name of which, in the Gaelic language, signifies *the abode of the fairies*. A native of that country, who is still living, happening to be benighted there one summer evening, without knowing that the place was haunted, wrapped himself in his plaid, and lay down to sleep till the morning. About midnight he was awaked by the most enchanting music; and on listening, he heard it to be the voice of a woman singing to her child. She sung the verses twice over, so that next morning he had several of them by heart. Fisher had heard them often recited in Gaelic, and he said they were wild beyond human conception. He remembered only a few lines, which were to the same purport with the Spirit's Song here inserted, namely, that she (the singer) had brought her babe from the regions below to be cooled by the breeze of the world, and that they would soon be obliged to part, for the child was going to heaven, and she was to remain for a season in purgatory. I had not before heard any thing so truly romantic.

Note XII.

*That the pine, which for ages had shed a bright halo,
 Afar round the mountains of Highland Glen-Falo,
 Should wither and fall ere the turn of yon moon,
 Smit through by the canker of hated Colquhoun.*—P. 141.

The pine was the standard, and is still the crest of

the M'Gregors; and it is well known that the proscription of that clan was occasioned by a slaughter of the Colquhouns, who were its constant and inveterate enemies. That bloody business let loose the vengeance of the country upon them, which had nearly extirpated the name. The Campbells and the Grahams arose and hunted them down like wild beasts, until a M'Gregor could no more be found.

Note XIII. *Earl Waller.*—P. 146.

This ballad is founded on a well known historical fact. Hollingshed mentions it slightly in the following words, "A Frenchman named Sir Anthony Darcie, knight, called afterwards *Le Sir de la Bantie*, came through England into Scotland, to seek feats of arms. And coming to the king the four and twentie of September, the Lord Hamilton fought with him right valiantly, and so as neither of them lost any piece of honour."

Note XIV. *From this the Hamiltons of Clyde, Their royal lineage draw.*—P. 163.

The Princess Margaret of Scotland was married to the Lord Hamilton when only sixteen years of age, who received the earldom of Arran as her dowry. Hollingshed says, "Of this marriage, those of the house of Hamilton are descended, and are nearest of blood to the crown of Scotland, as they pretend; for (as saith Lesleus, *lib. viii. p. 316.*) if the line of the Stewards fail, the crown is to come to them."

Note XV.

Kilmeny.—P. 167.

Beside the old tradition on which this ballad is founded, there are some modern incidents of a similar nature, which cannot well be accounted for, yet are as well attested as any occurrence that has taken place in the present age. The relation may be amusing to some readers.

A man in the parish of Traquair, and county of Peebles, was busied one day casting turf in a large open field opposite to the mansion-house—the spot is well known, and still pointed out as rather unsafe; his daughter, a child seven years of age, was playing beside him, and amusing him with her prattle. Chancing to ask a question at her, he was astonished at receiving no answer, and, looking behind him, he perceived that his child was not there. He always averred that, as far as he could remember, she had been talking to him about half a minute before; he was certain it was not above a whole one at most. It was in vain that he ran searching all about like one distracted, calling her name;—no trace of her remained. He went home in a state of mind that may be better conceived than expressed, and raised the people of the parish, who searched for her several days, with the same success. Every pool in the river, every bush and den on the mountains around was searched, in vain. It was remarked that the father never much encouraged the search, being thoroughly persuaded that she was carried away by some invisible being, else she could not have vanished so suddenly. As a last resource, he applied to the minister of Inverleithen, a neighbouring divine of exem-

plary piety and zeal in religious matters, who enjoined him to cause prayers be offered to God for her in seven Christian churches, next Sabbath, at the same instant of time; "and then," said he, "if she is dead, God will forgive our sin in praying for the dead, as we do it through ignorance; and if she is still alive, I will answer for it, that all the devils in hell shall be unable to keep her." The injunction was punctually attended to. She was remembered in the prayers of all the neighbouring congregations, next Sunday, at the same hour, and never were there such prayers for fervour heard before. There was one divine in particular, Mr Davidson, who prayed in such a manner that all the hearers trembled. As the old divine foreboded, so it fell out. On that very day, and within an hour of the time on which these prayers were offered, the girl was found, in the Flora wood, sitting, picking the bark from a tree. She could give no perfect account of the circumstances which had befallen to her, but she said she did not want plenty of meat, for that her mother came and fed her with milk and bread several times a day, and sung her to sleep at night. Her skin had acquired a blueish cast, which wore gradually off in the course of a few weeks. Her name was Salton,—she lived to be the mother of a family.

Another circumstance, though it happened still later, is not less remarkable. A shepherd of Tushilaw, in the parish of Ettrick, whose name was Walter Dalglish, went out to the heights of that farm, one Sabbath morning, to herd the young sheep for his son, and let him to church. He took his own dinner along with him, and his son's breakfast. When the sermons were over, the lad went straight home, and did not return

to his father. Night came, but nothing of the old shepherd appeared. When it grew very late his dog came home—seemed terrified, and refused to take any meat. The family were ill at ease during the night, especially as they never had known his dog leave him before; and early next morning the lad arose and went to the height to look after his father and his flock. He found his sheep all scattered, and his father's dinner unbroken, lying on the same spot where they had parted the day before. At the distance of 20 yards from the spot, the plaid which the old man wore was lying as if it had been flung from him, and a little farther on, in the same direction, his bonnet was found, but nothing of himself. The country people, as on all such occasions, rose in great numbers, and searched for him many days. My father, and several old men still alive, were of the party. He could not be found or heard of, neither dead nor alive, and at length they gave up all thoughts of ever seeing him more.

On the 20th day after his disappearance, a shepherd's wife, at a place called Berry-bush, came in as the family was sitting down to dinner, and said, that if it were possible to believe that Walter Dalgleish was still in existence, she would say yonder was he coming down the hill. They all ran out to watch the phenomenon, and as the person approached nigher, they perceived that it was actually he, walking without his plaid and his bonnet. The place where he was first descried is not a mile distant from that where he was last seen. When he came into the house, he shook hands with them all—asked for his family, and spoke as if he had been absent for years, and as if convinced something had befallen them. As they perceived something sin-

gular in his looks and manner, they unfortunately forbore asking him any questions at first, but desired him to sit and share their dinner. This he readily complied with, and began to sup some broth with seeming eagerness. He had only taken one or two spoonfuls when he suddenly stopped, a kind of rattling noise was heard in his breast, and he sunk back in a faint. They put him to bed, and from that time forth he never spoke another word that any person could make sense of. He was removed to his own home, where he lingered a few weeks, and then died. What befel him remains to this day a mystery, and for ever must.

Note XVI.

But oft the listening groups stood still,

For spirits talked along the hill.—P. 102.

The echoes of evening, which are occasioned by the voices or mirth of different parties not aware of each other, have a curious and striking effect. I have known some country people terrified almost out of their senses at hearing voices and laughter among cliffs, where they knew it impossible for human being to reach. Some of the echoes around Edinburgh are extremely grand; what would they then be were the hills covered with wood? I have witnessed nothing more romantic than from a situation behind the Pleasance, where all the noises of the city are completely hushed, to hear the notes of the drum, trumpet, and bugle, poured from the cliffs of Salisbury, and the viewless cannons thundering from the rock. The effect is truly sublime.

Note XVII.

Mary Scott.—P. 196.

This ballad is founded on the old song of *The grey Goss Hawk*. The catastrophe is the same, and happens at the same place, namely, in St Mary's churchyard. The castle of Tushilaw, where the chief scene of the tale is laid, stood on a shelf of the hill which overlooks the junction of the rivers Ettrick and Rankleburn. It is a singular situation, and seems to have been chosen for the extensive prospect of the valley which it commands both to the east and west. It was the finest old baronial castle of which the Forest can boast, but the upper arches and turrets fell in, of late years, with a crash that alarmed the whole neighbourhood. It is now a huge heap of ruins. Its last inhabitant was Adam Scott, who was long denominated in the south the *King of the Border*, but the courtiers called him the *King of Thieves*. King James V. acted upon the same principle with these powerful chiefs, most of whom disregarded his authority, as Bonaparte has done with the sovereigns of Europe. He always managed matters so as to take each of them single-handed—made a rapid and secret march—overthrew one or two of them, and then returned directly home till matters were ripe for taking the advantage of some other. He marched on one day from Edinburgh to Meggatdale, accompanied by a chosen body of horsemen, surprised Peres Cockburn, a bold and capricious outlaw who tyrannized over those parts, hanged him over his own gate, sacked and burnt his castle of Henderland, and divided his lands between two of his principal followers, Sir James Stuart and the Lord

Hume. From Henderland he marched across the mountains by a wild unfrequented path, still called *the King's Road*, and appeared before the gates of Tushilaw about sun-rise. Scott was completely taken by surprise; he, however, rushed to arms with his few friends who were present, and, after a desperate but unequal conflict, King James overcame him, plundered his castle of riches and stores to a prodigious amount, hanged the old Border king over a huge tree which is still growing in the corner of the castle yard, and over which he himself had hanged many a one, carried his head with him in triumph to Edinburgh, and placed it on a pole over one of the ports. There was a long and deadly feud between the Scotts and the Kers in those days; the Pringles, Murrays, and others around, always joined with the latter, in order to keep down the too powerful Scotts, who were not noted as the best of neighbours.

Note XVIII.

King Edward's dream.—P. 243.

The scene of this ballad is on the banks of the Eden in Cumberland, a day's march back from Burgh, on the sands of Solway, where King Edward I. died, in the midst of an expedition against the Scots, in which he had solemnly sworn to extirpate them as a nation.

Note XIX.

Dumlanrig.—P. 252.

This ballad relates to a well-known historical fact, of which tradition has preserved an accurate and feasible detail. The battles took place two or three years subsequent to the death of King James V. I have

heard that it is succinctly related by some historian, but I have forgot who it is. Hollingshed gives a long bungling account of the matter, but places the one battle a year before the other; whereas it does not appear that Lennox made two excursions into Nithsdale, at the head of the English forces, or fought two bloody battles with the laird of Dumlanrig on the same ground, as the historian would insinuate. He says, that Dumlanrig, after pursuing them cautiously for some time, was overthrown in attempting to cross a ford of the river too rashly, that he lost two of his principal kinsmen, and 200 of his followers, had several spears broken upon his body, and escaped only by the goodness of his horse. The battle which took place next night, he relates as having happened next year; but it must be visible to every reader that he is speaking of the same incidents in the annals of both years. In the second engagement he acknowledges that Dumlanrig defeated the English horse, which he attributes to a desertion from the latter, but that, after pursuing them as far as Dalswinton, they were joined by the foot, and retrieved the day. The account given of the battles by Lesleus and Fran. Thin seems to have been so different, that they have misled the chronologer; the names of the towns and villages appearing to him so different, whereas a local knowledge of the country would have convinced him that both accounts related to the same engagements.

Note XX.

M'Kinnon the Abbot.—P. 284.

To describe the astonishing scenes to which this romantic tale relates, Icolmkill and Staffa, so well known

to the curious, would only be multiplying pages to no purpose.

Note XXI.

*O, wise was the founder, and well said he,
"Where there are women mischief must be!"*—P. 286.

St Columba placed the nuns in an island at a little distance from I, as the natives call Iona. He would not suffer either a cow or a woman to set foot on it; "for where there are cows," said he, "there must be women; and where there are women, there must be mischief."

Note XXII.

The harp of Ettrick rung again.—P. 314.

That some notable bard flourished in Ettrick Forest in that age, is evident from the numerous ballads and songs which relate to places in that country, and incidents that happened there. Many of these are of a very superior cast. *Outlaw Murray, Young Tam Lean Of Carterhaugh, Jamie Telfer i' the fair Dodhead, The dowy Downs of Yarrow*, and many others are of the number. Dumbar, in his lament for the bards, merely mentions him by the title of *Ettrick*; more of him we know not.

Note XXIII.

*Gardyn is crowned with garlands gay,
And bears the envied prize away.*—P. 315.

Queen Mary's harp, of most curious workmanship, was found in the house of Lude, on the banks of the Garry in Athol, as was the old Caledonian harp. They were both brought to that house by a bride, which the

chieftain of Lude married from the family of Gardyn of Banchory, (now Garden of Troup.) It was defaced of all its gems, and Queen Mary's portrait, set in gold, during the last rebellion. See Gunn *on the Harp*.

Note XXIV.

Bangour the daring task essayed.—P. 320.

Alluding to his popular ballad beginning, *Busk ye, busk ye, my bonny bonny bride.*"

Note XXV.

Redoubted Ramsay.—P. 320.

Alluding to his song of *Eltrick Banks*, in the *Teatable Miscellany*.

Note XXVI.

Langhorne arrived, &c.—P. 320.

Alluding to his poem of *Genius and Valour*, or *Yarrow Banks*, and *Groves of Endermay*.

Note XXVII.

Sweet rung the harp to Logan's hand.—P. 321.

Alluding to his beautiful song, *The Braes of Yarrow*.

THE END.

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